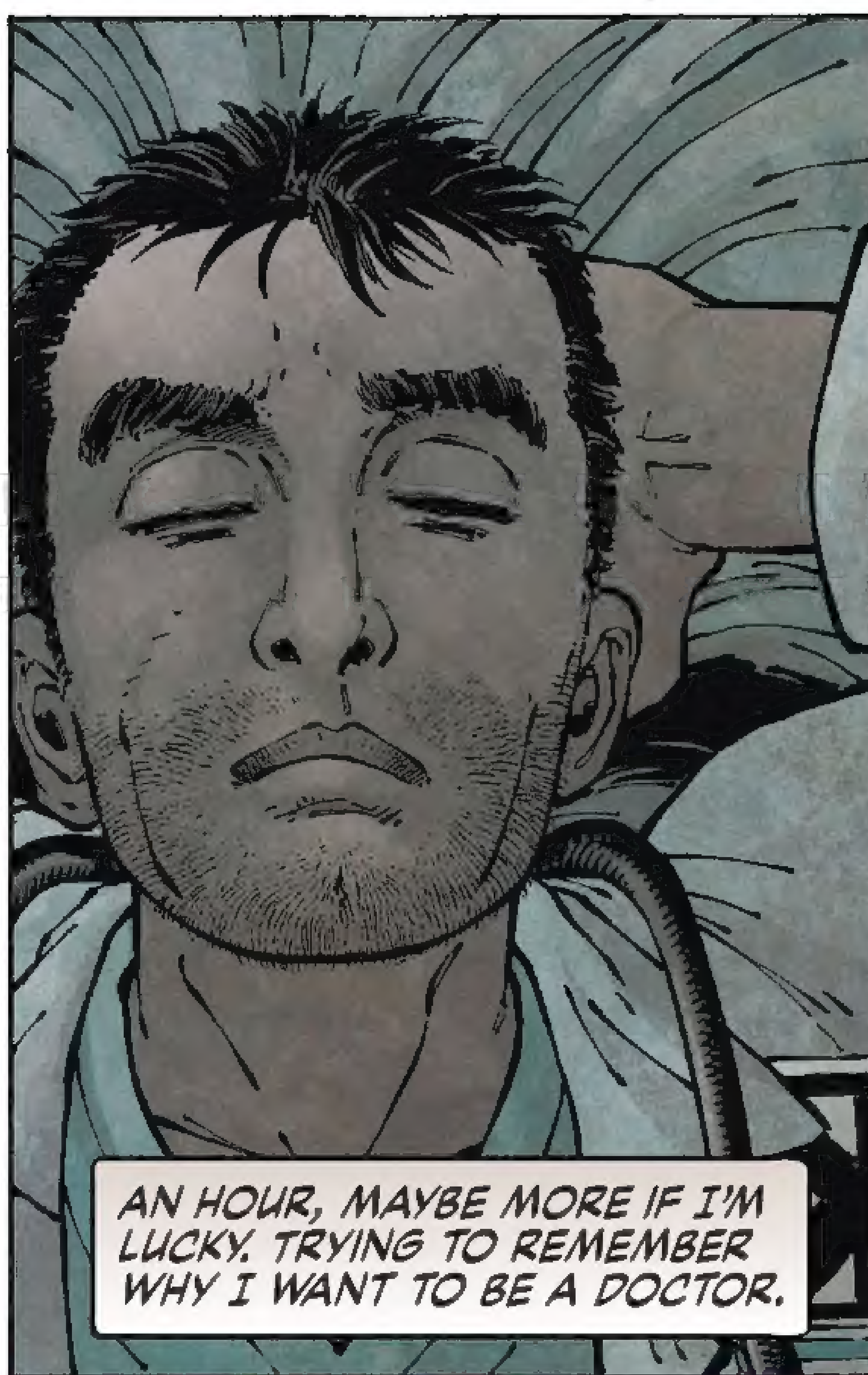
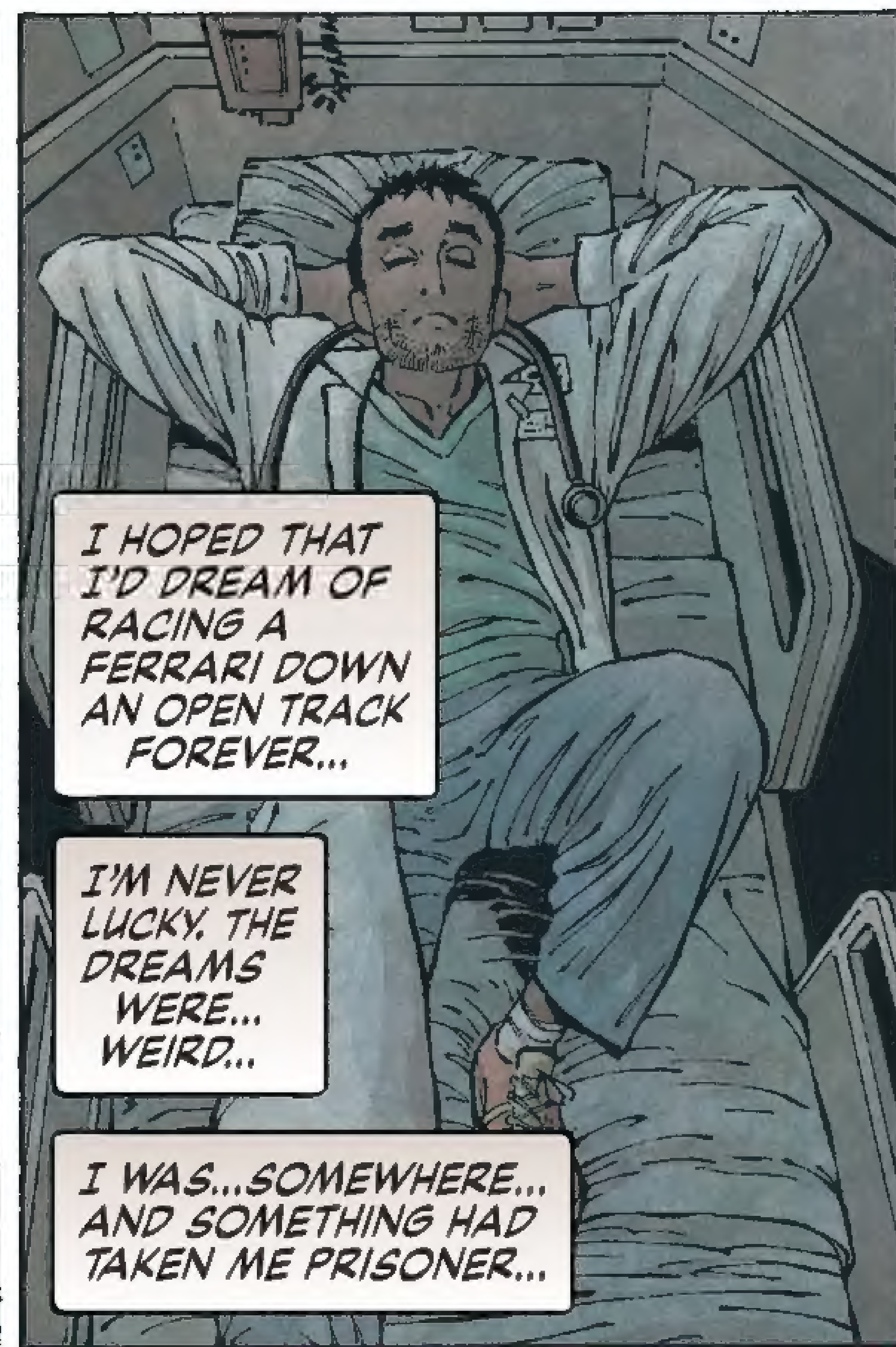

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ON A GOOD NIGHT--NO INTERSTATE PILE-UPS, NO KNIFE-WIELDING CRAZIES--BY FIVE-THIRTY IN THE MORNING THE HOSPITAL GETS QUIET.
BELLEVUE HOSPITAL CENTER
Curry, Mark
Extern, Emergency
SOMETIMES I CAN GRAB SOME SLEEP IN AN EMPTY BED.


AN HOUR, MAYBE MORE IF I'M LUCKY. TRYING TO REMEMBER WHY I WANT TO BE A DOCTOR.

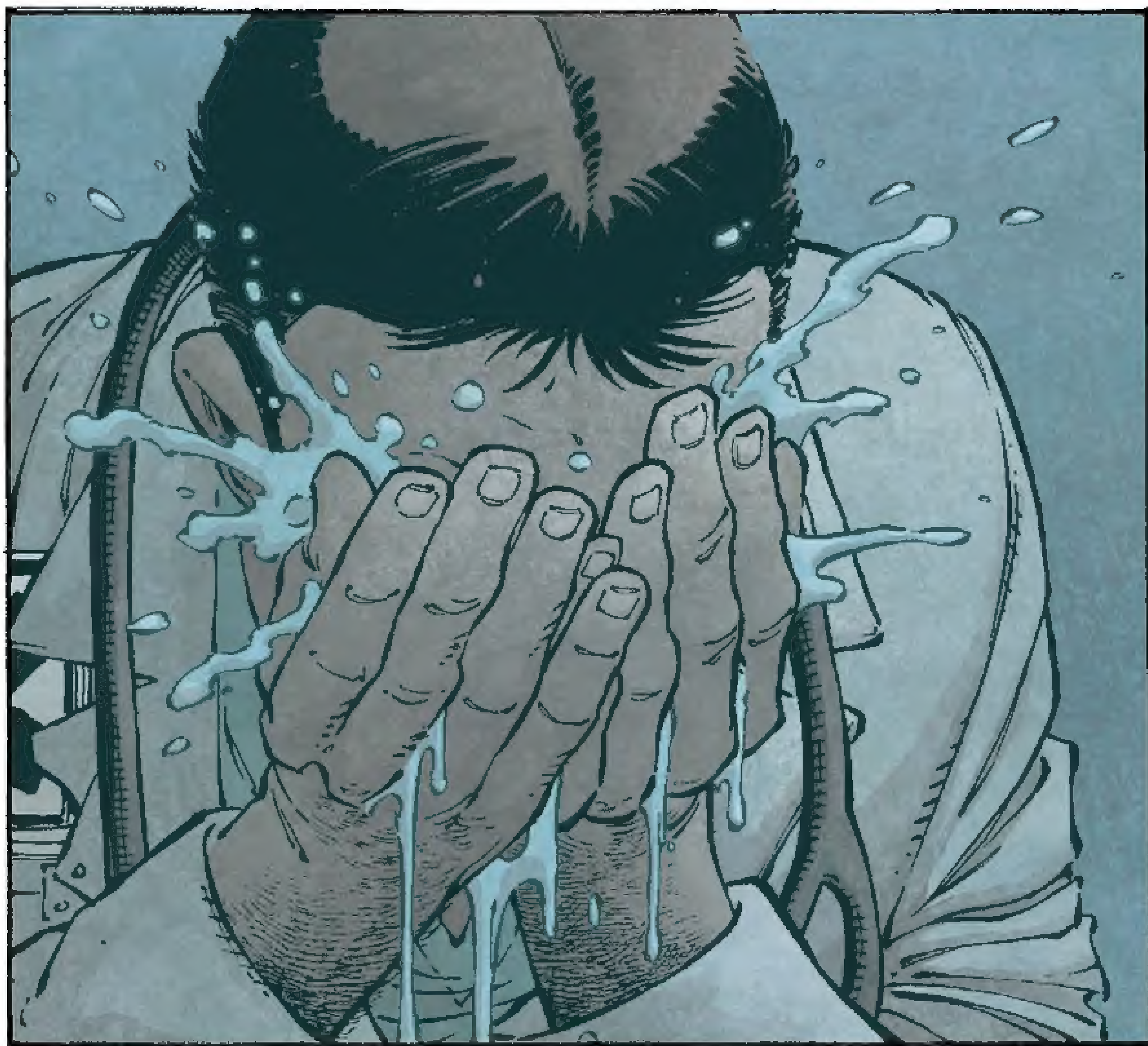

I HOPED THAT I'D DREAM OF RACING A FERRARI DOWN AN OPEN TRACK FOREVER...
I'M NEVER LUCKY. THE DREAMS WERE... WEIRD...
I WAS...SOMEWHERE... AND SOMETHING HAD TAKEN ME PRISONER...

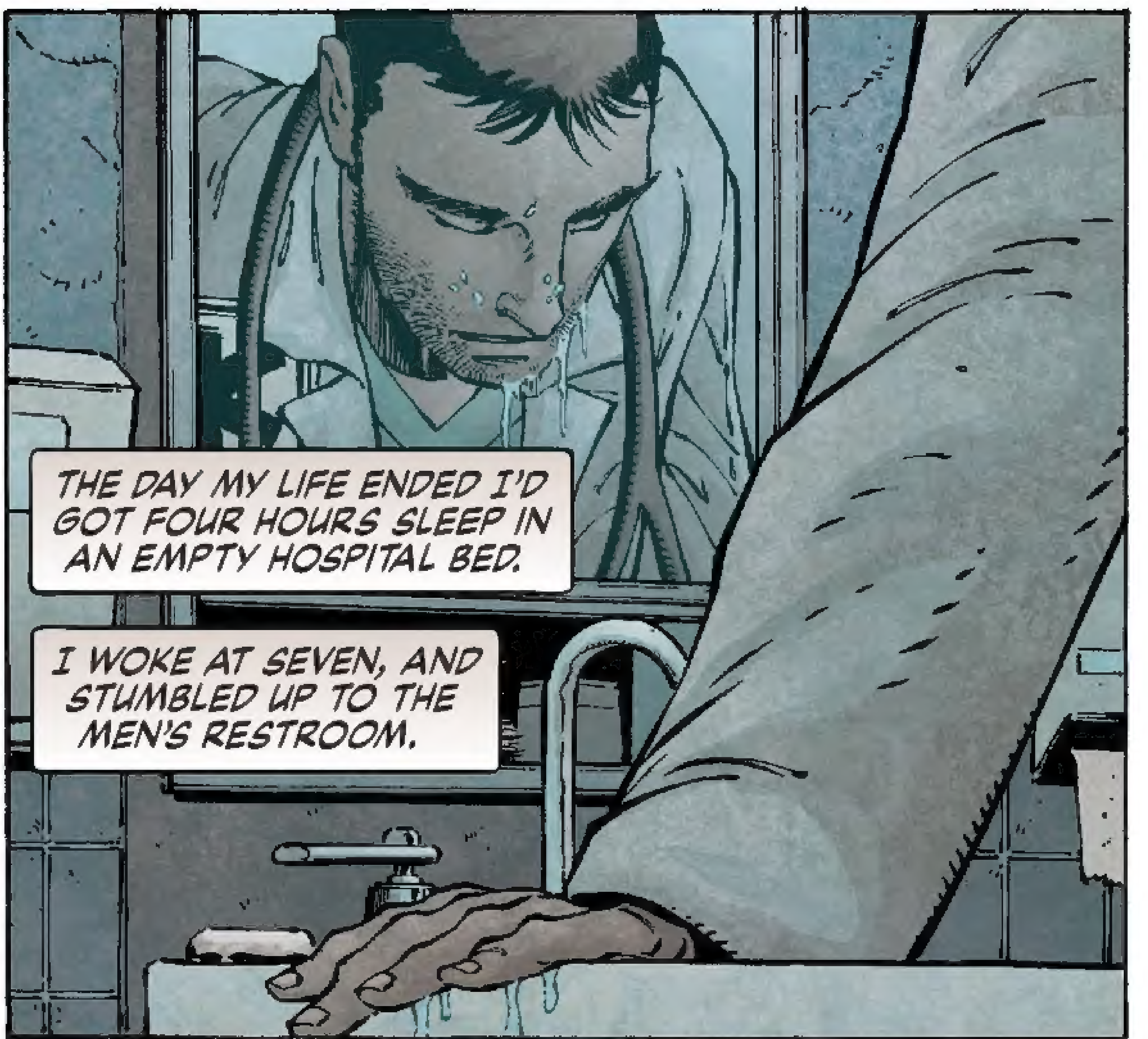

Your speed cannot help you now, creature...
LET HIM GO.

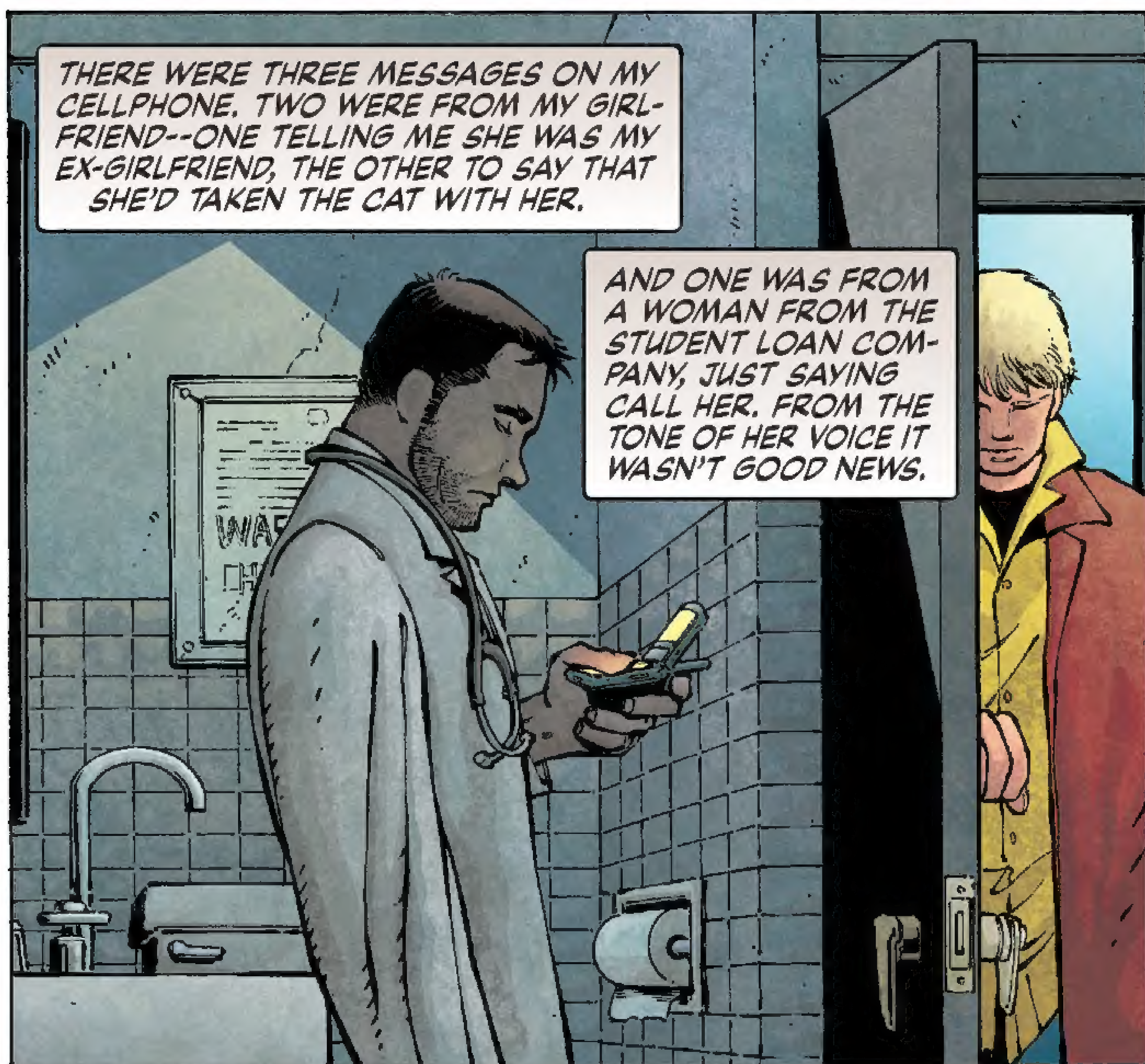

I SAID, LET HIM GO.


Why should we listen to you? We are the rulers of the Earth...
POOR FOOLISH DEVIANTS.


RULERS OF EARTH? NO. NOT ANY LONGER.
THE REAL OWNERS HAVE RETURNED.

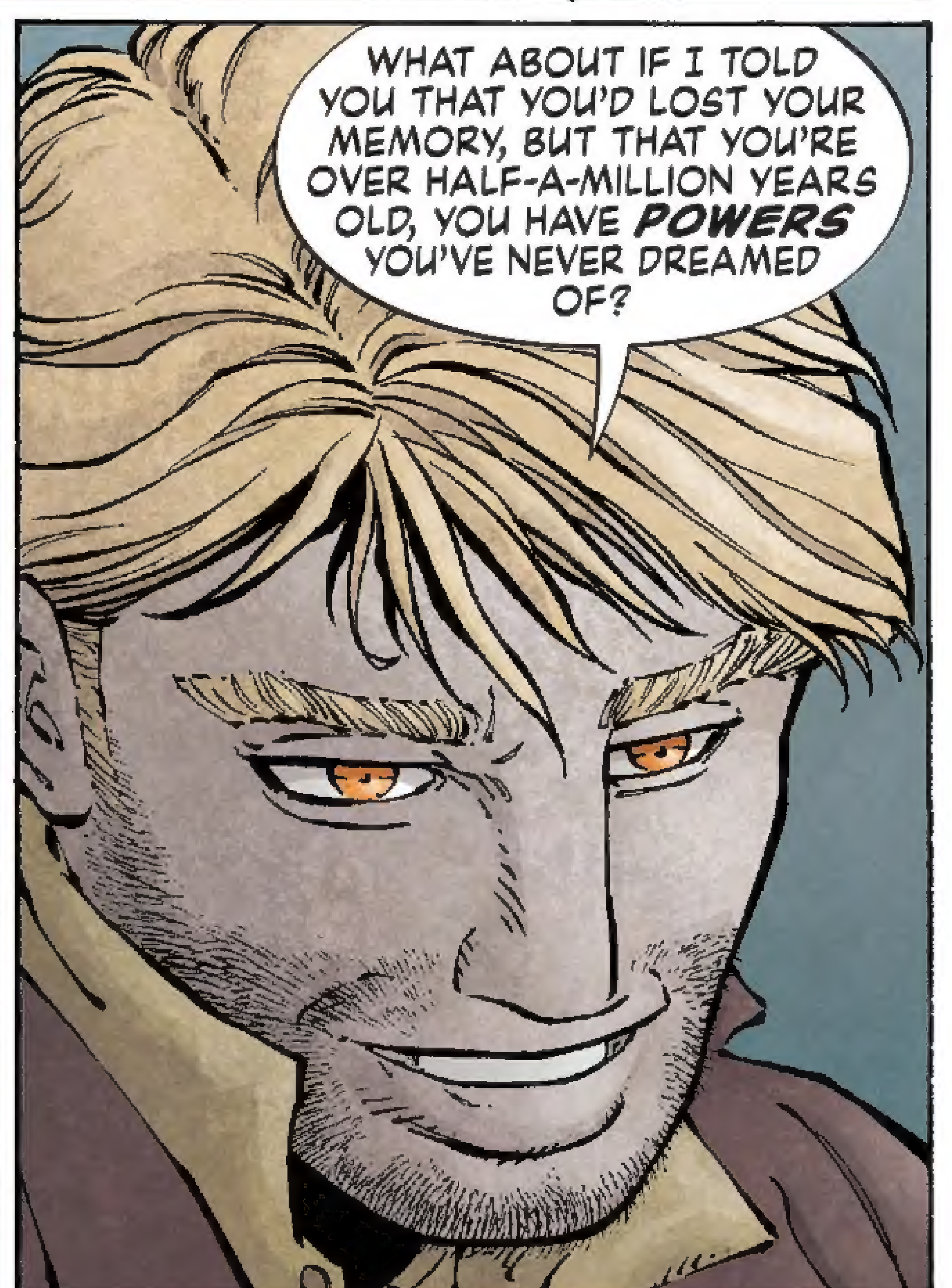



THE DAY MY LIFE ENDED I'D GOT FOUR HOURS SLEEP IN AN EMPTY HOSPITAL BED.
I WOKE AT SEVEN, AND STUMBLED UP TO THE MEN'S RESTROOM.

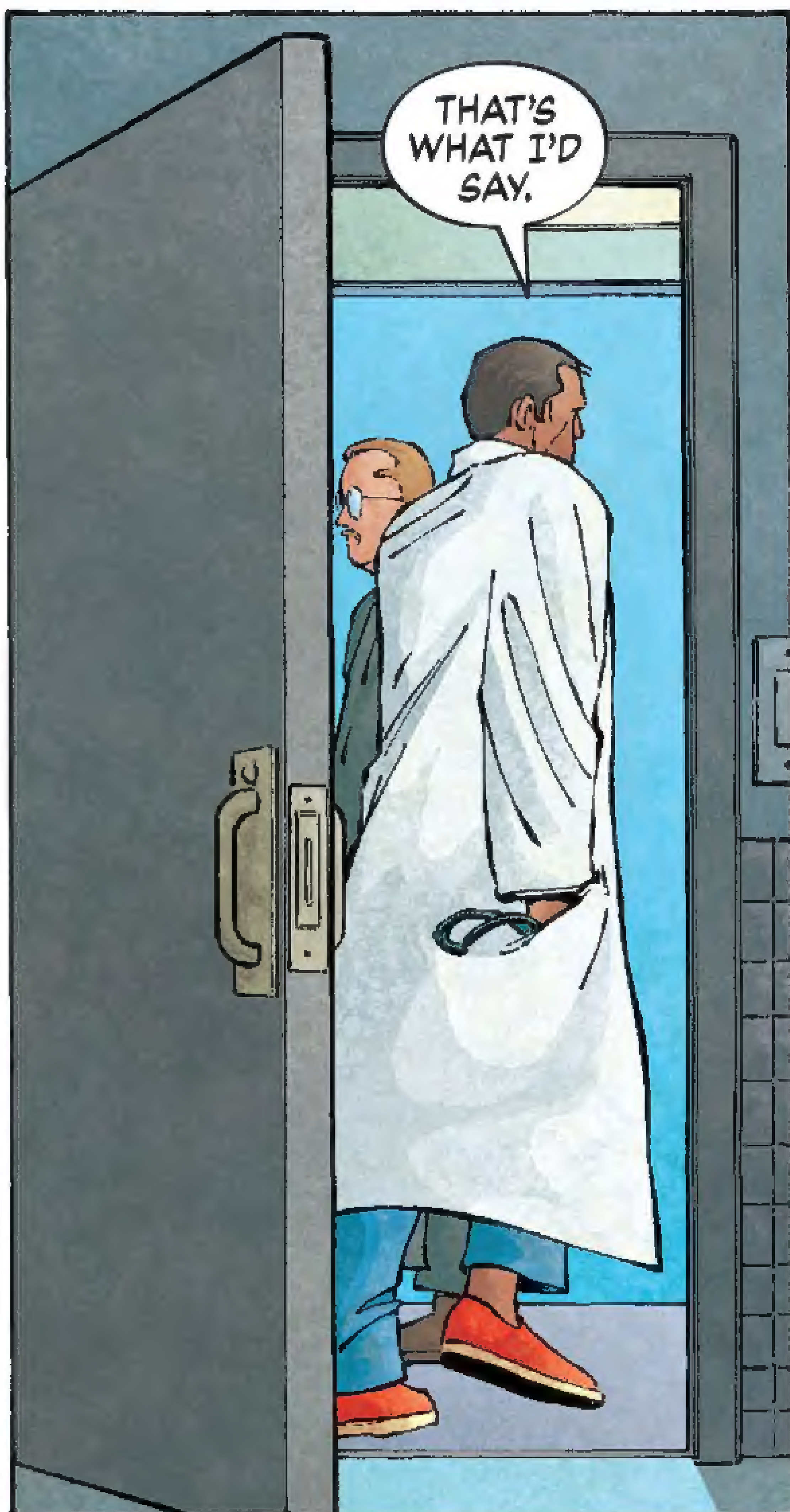

THERE WERE THREE MESSAGES ON MY CELLPHONE. TWO WERE FROM MY GIRL-FRIEND--ONE TELLING ME SHE WAS MY EX-GIRLFRIEND, THE OTHER TO SAY THAT SHE'D TAKEN THE CAT WITH HER.
AND ONE WAS FROM A WOMAN FROM THE STUDENT LOAN COM-PANY, JUST SAYING CALL HER. FROM THE TONE OF HER VOICE IT WASN'T GOOD NEWS.


GOOD MORNING. ARE YOU DR. CURRY?
I'M NOT A DOCTOR YET. BUT YEAH, I'M CURRY.


MARK CURRY. I'VE GOT SOME **GOOD NEWS** FOR YOU.
GREAT. I NEED GOOD NEWS.
WHAT WOULD YOU SAY IF I TOLD YOU THAT **YOU** WERE AN IMMORTAL, INDESTRUCTIBLE BEING, PUT HERE BY ALIENS TO PRESERVE AND SAFEGUARD THE EARTH?
I GUESS I'D SAY PLEASE LEAVE ME ALONE.


WHAT ABOUT IF I TOLD YOU THAT YOU'D LOST YOUR MEMORY, BUT THAT YOU'RE OVER HALF-A-MILLION YEARS OLD, YOU HAVE **POWERS** YOU'VE NEVER DREAMED OF?

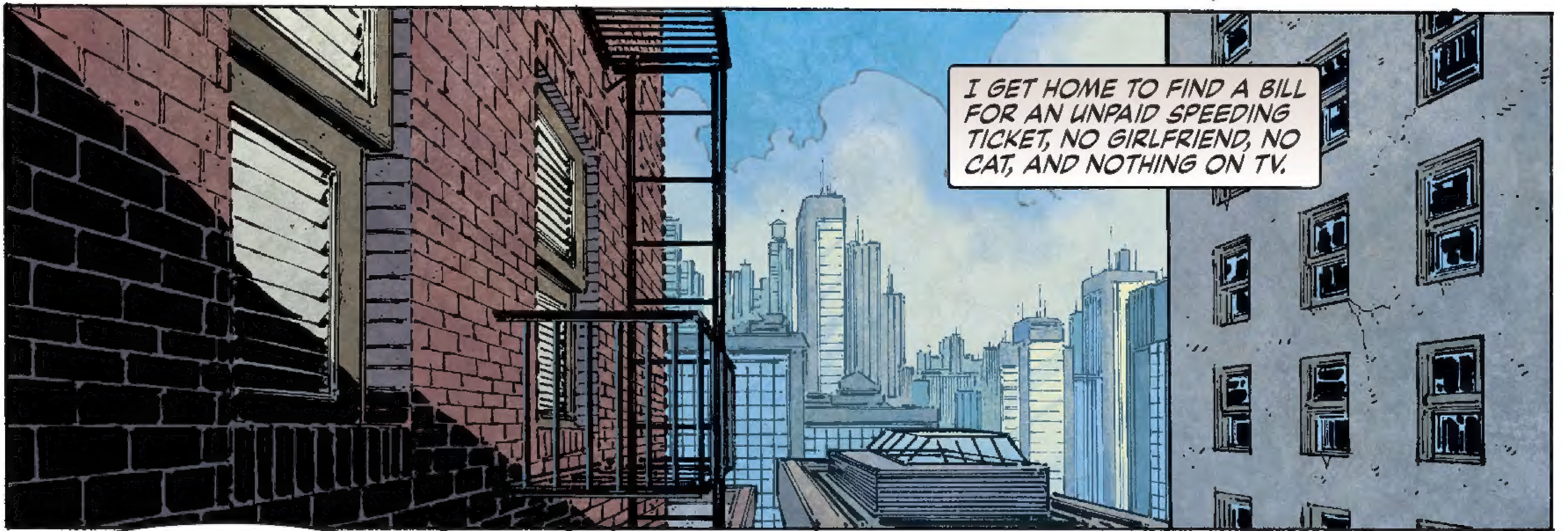

I'D SAY I DON'T NEED A RELIGION. AND, BECAUSE I'M TOO DAMN TIRED TO BE POLITE, I'D SAY YOU'RE CRAZY.
AND I'D SAY THAT UNLESS YOU GOT OUTTA MY FACE I'M CALLING HOSPITAL SECURITY. RIGHT NOW.

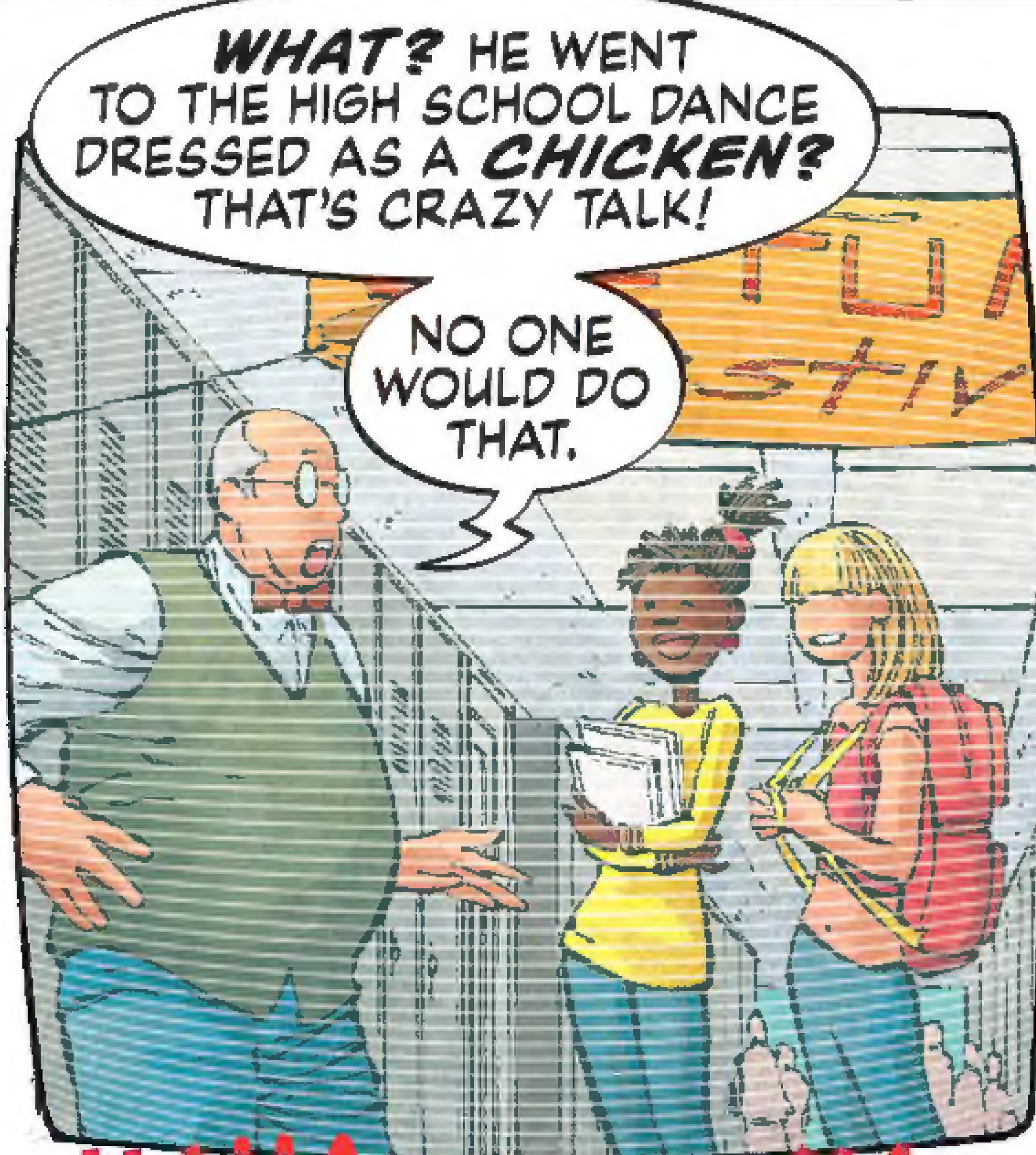

THAT'S WHAT I'D SAY.

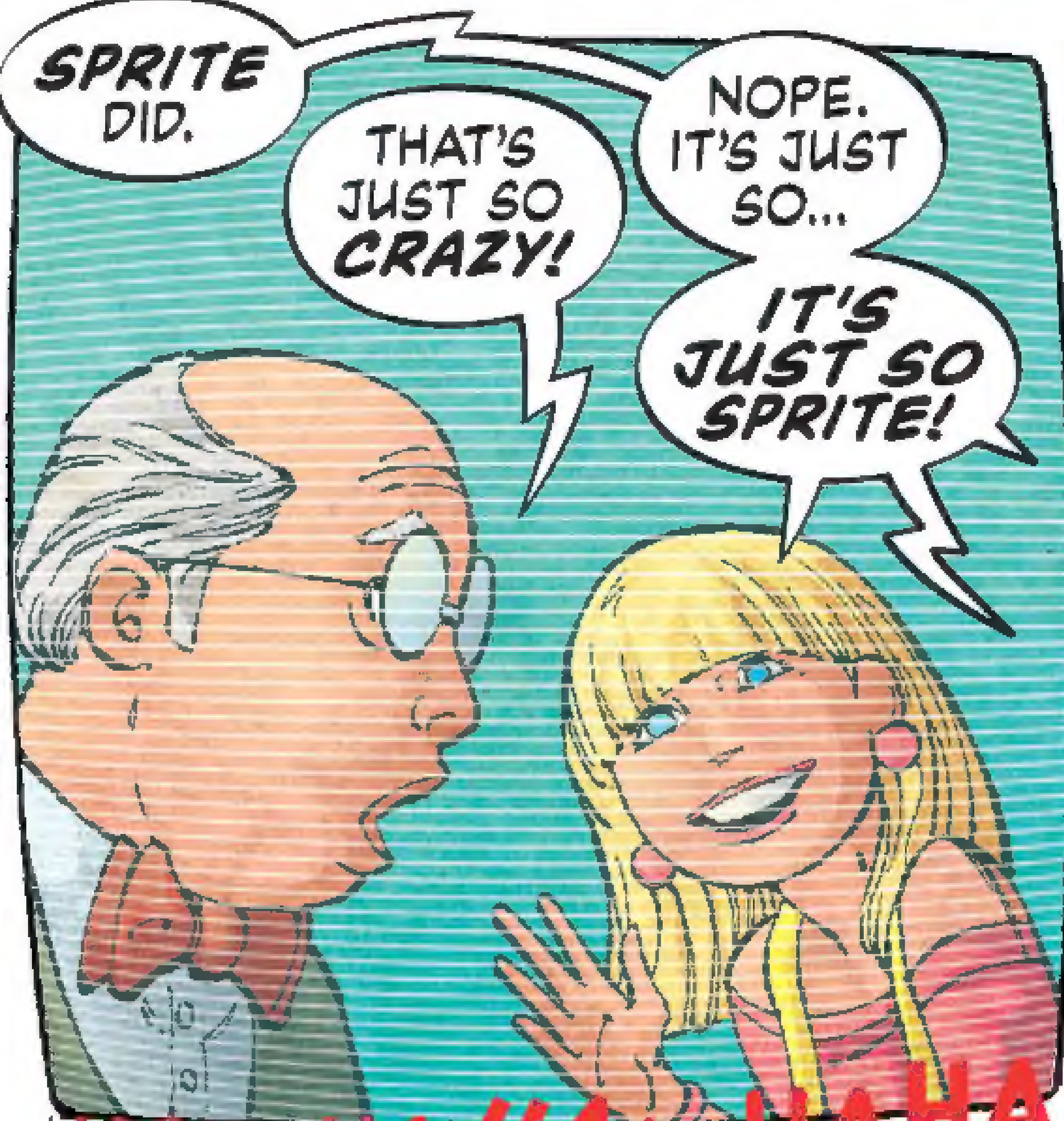

THAT'S WHAT I WAS AFRAID OF.


THE ENCOUNTER LEAVES ME FEELING WEIRD AND UNSETTLED, AND IT WIPES THE LAST OF THE DREAM FROM MY MIND...
...LEAVING NOTHING BUT A MEMORY OF TIME BEYOND RECKONING...

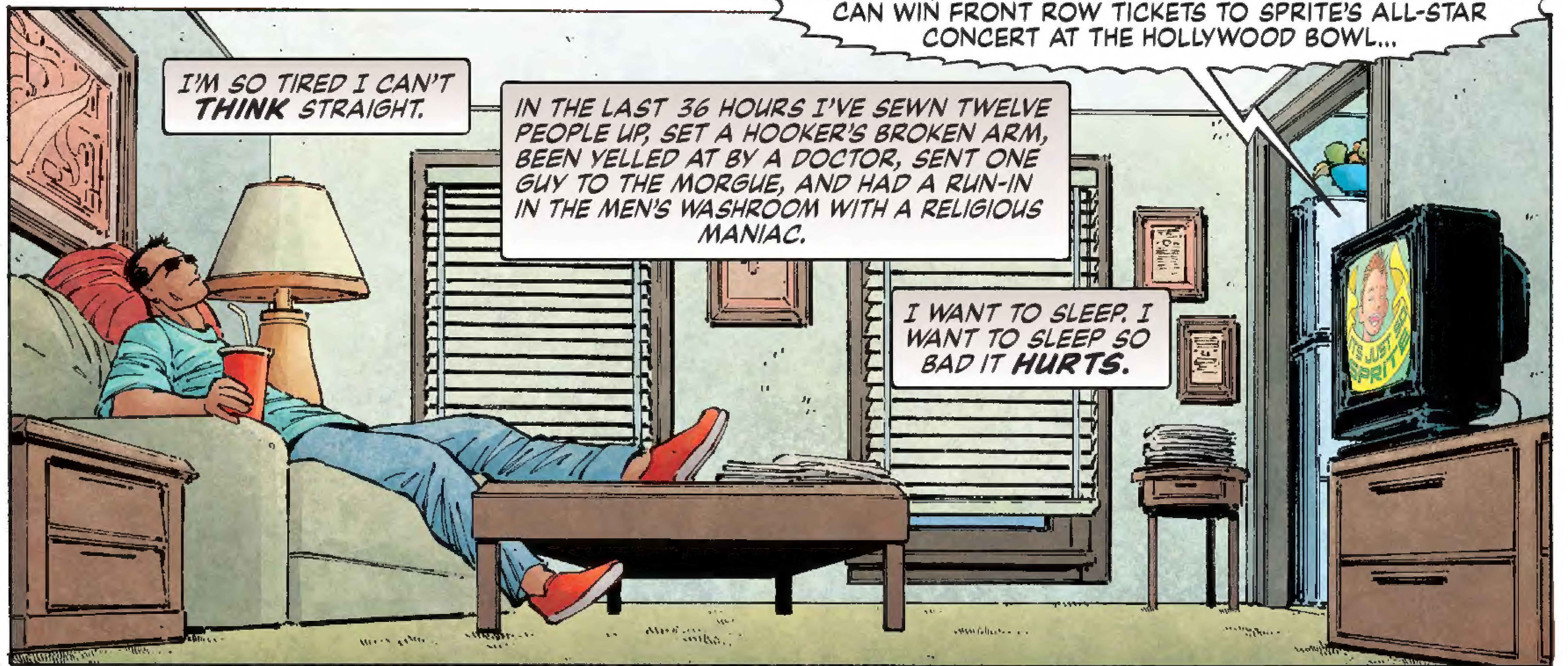

...AND OF GOLD-COLORED EYES I'M SURE I'VE SEEN BEFORE...

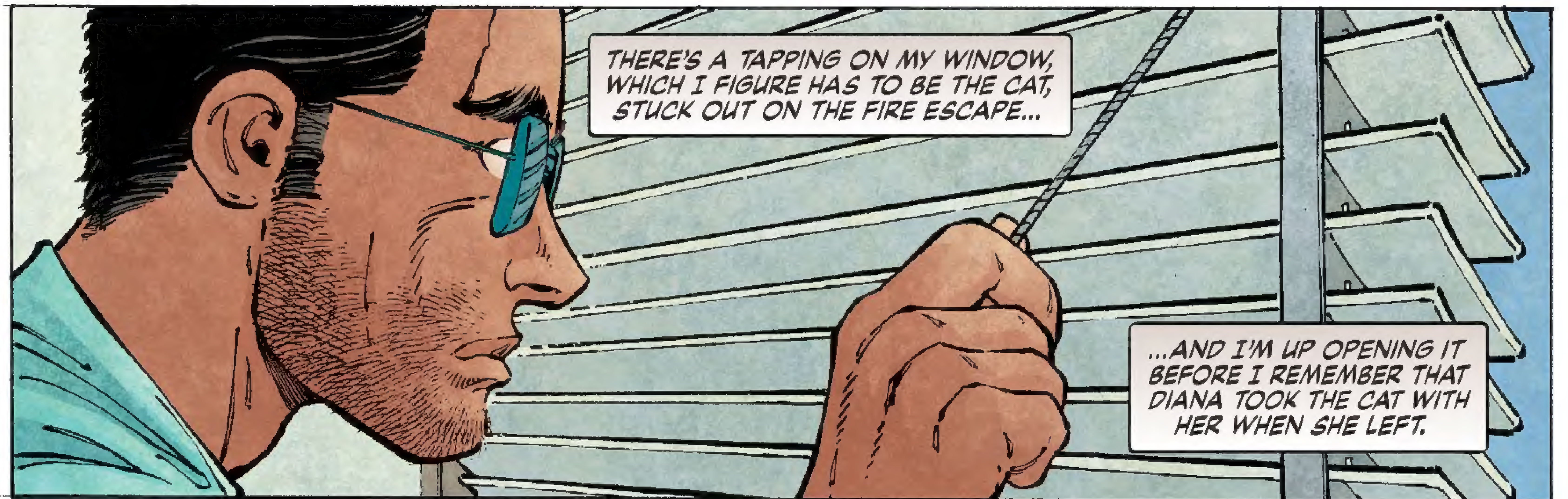

I GET HOME TO FIND A BILL FOR AN UNPAID SPEEDING TICKET, NO GIRLFRIEND, NO CAT, AND NOTHING ON TV.


WHAT? HE WENT TO THE HIGH SCHOOL DANCE DRESSED AS A CHICKEN? THAT'S CRAZY TALK!
NO ONE WOULD DO THAT.
HAHAHAhaHAHAha


SPRITE DID.
THAT'S JUST SO CRAZY!
NOPE. IT'S JUST SO...
IT'S JUST SO SPRITE!
HAhaHAHAhaHAHA

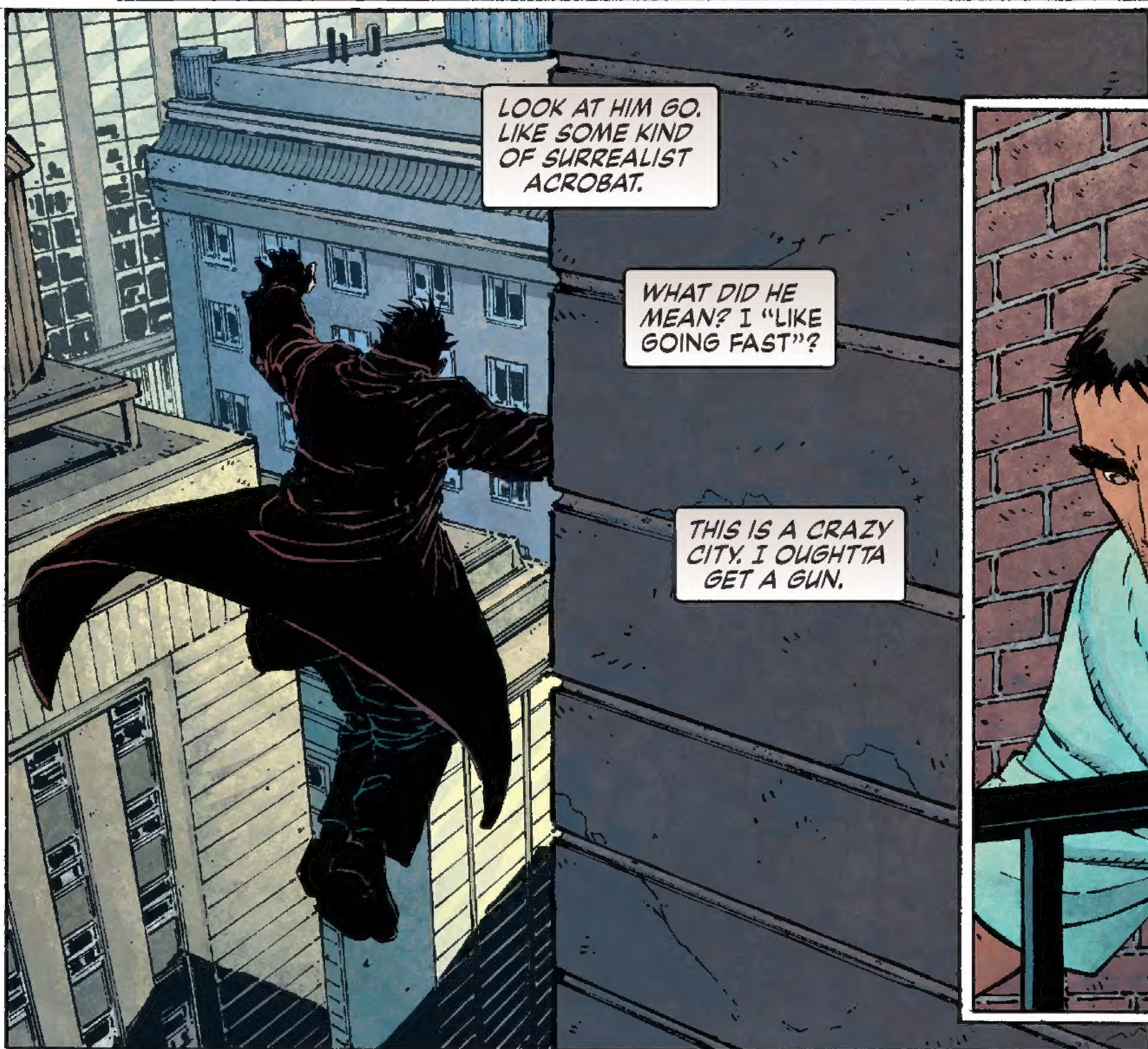

IT'S JUST SO SPRITE
HAHAHAhaHAHAha


"IT'S JUST SO SPRITE" WILL BE BACK ON THE TWEENY CHANNEL THIS TIME NEXT WEEK, BUT NOW STAY TUNED TO FIND OUT HOW YOU CAN WIN FRONT ROW TICKETS TO SPRITE'S ALL-STAR CONCERT AT THE HOLLYWOOD BOWL...
I'M SO TIRED I CAN'T THINK STRAIGHT.
IN THE LAST 36 HOURS I'VE SEWN TWELVE PEOPLE UP, SET A HOOKER'S BROKEN ARM, BEEN YELLED AT BY A DOCTOR, SENT ONE GUY TO THE MORGUE, AND HAD A RUN-IN IN THE MEN'S WASHROOM WITH A RELIGIOUS MANIAC.
I WANT TO SLEEP. I WANT TO SLEEP SO BAD IT HURTS.


THERE'S A TAPPING ON MY WINDOW, WHICH I FIGURE HAS TO BE THE CAT, STUCK OUT ON THE FIRE ESCAPE...
...AND I'M UP OPENING IT BEFORE I REMEMBER THAT DIANA TOOK THE CAT WITH HER WHEN SHE LEFT.

NO.
PLEASE.
NOT NOW.
MR. CURRY? MARK? WE NEED TO **TALK.**
AND I'M WONDERING IF I HAVE SOMETHING I COULD USE AS A WEAPON IN THE APARTMENT AND ALL I CAN THINK TO SAY IS...
HOW DID YOU GET UP HERE?
I NEEDED TO TALK TO YOU. THIS SEEMED THE BEST WAY.
MY NAME'S HARRIS. IKE HARRIS. I, UH. HAVE YOU EVER **WONDERED** ABOUT THE ORIGINS OF INTELLIGENT **LIFE** ON THIS PLANET?
NOPE. PLEASE LEAVE ME ALONE.
I'M TALKING ABOUT THE PURPOSE OF LIFE. THE MEANING OF EVERYTHING. WHY WE'RE **HERE.**
WE'RE HERE BECAUSE A **BILLION** YEARS AGO A BUNCH OF CHEMICALS BUMPED UP AGAINST EACH OTHER DURING A LIGHTNING STORM AND THEY FIGURED OUT HOW TO REPLICATE THEMSELVES AND SURVIVE. AND THEY KEPT DOING IT BECAUSE THEY **LIKE** IT.
WELL, I DON'T KNOW ABOUT THAT...I WASN'T **THERE.** NOT **THEN.** I'M TALKING ABOUT **PEOPLE.** INTELLIGENT LIFE ON EARTH.
Y'KNOW, I DON'T **NEED** THIS CRAP. YOU PEOPLE BURN DOWN CLINICS...YOU ONLY EXPECT MIRACLES UNTIL YOU WIND UP NEEDING MEDICS. SO I **DON'T** WANT TO READ YOUR PAMPHLETS AND I **DON'T** WANT TO LISTEN TO YOUR IDIOCY AND I **DON'T** WANT YOU ON MY DAMN FIRE ESCAPE...
I UNDERSTAND. WE WILL TALK MORE.
NO. ***NO,*** WE WON'T. I'M CALLING THE COPS.
MARK CURRY. YOU AREN'T HUMAN. I'M NOT HUMAN EITHER. WE'RE SOMETHING ELSE...
DUDE. I'M A **DOCTOR.** WELL, I'M A MED STUDENT. BUT, TRUST ME, I'M **HUMAN,** OKAY?
NOW TAKE YOUR CRAZINESS AND YOUR NUTSO-RELIGION OUT OF HERE. AND IF I SEE YOU AGAIN, I'M CALLING THE COPS. AND I HAVE A GUN HERE.

DON'T LIE, MARK CURRY. YOU DON'T LIKE GUNS. YOU LIKE GOING FAST. JUST AS I LIKE GOING UP. I'LL BE ON THE OBSERVATION DECK OF THE ROYER BUILDING IF YOU NEED ME.





BzzzZzzzZzZz
BzzzZ BzzzZ

BzzzZzzzZzZzZzZzZ

MORNING, ABI.
SERSI?
I BROUGHT YOU A CUP OF CAFFEINATED MORNING HAPPINESS.

HEY, ABIGAIL. SINCE I'M HERE, CAN I ASK A FAVOR?
WHAT?

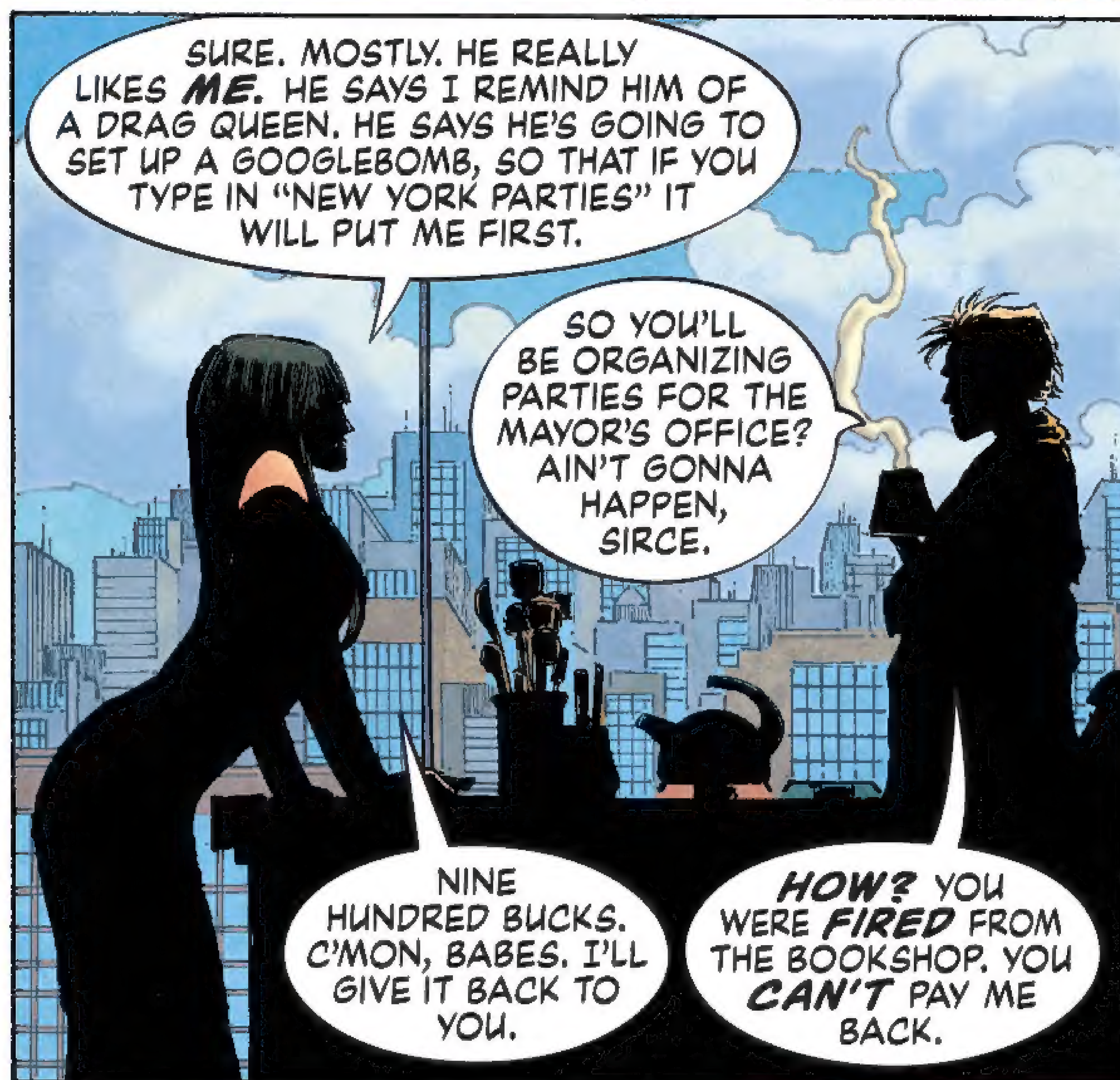
UH. CAN I BORROW NINE HUNDRED BUCKS?
WHAT?
NINE HUNDRED BUCKS. C'MON. IT'S NOT THAT MUCH. WELL, IT IS TO ME. NOT TO YOU.

WHY?
RENT. C'MON, ABI. MY LANDLORD'S STARTED LURKING ON THE STAIRWELL. NEXT THING HE'S GOING TO CHANGE THE LOCKS. HE HATES THAT I'M IN A RENT-CONTROLLED APARTMENT ANYWAY...
GET A JOB.
I'VE ***GOT*** A JOB.

HON, INSTIGATING FLASH CROWDS IS NOT A JOB. GOING TO PARTIES IS NOT A JOB.
NO. BUT *PLANNING* PARTIES IS A JOB.
WHO THE HELL'S GOING TO PAY ***YOU*** FOR ***THAT?***


OKAY. WELL. SO WHEN I DID THE INTERVIEW WITH SALONDOTCOM ABOUT THE WHOLE FLASH CROWD IN MACY'S THING, I TOLD THEM I HAD A WEBSITE, PARTIESBYSERSIDOTCOM. AND THEN I GOT TODD, YOU KNOW, THE ONE WHO LIKES ME, TO ACTUALLY PUT IT UP.


TODD WITH THE LIP-RING?
NO. TODD WITH THE BANANA SPLITZ TATTOO.
BUT BANANA SPLITZ TODD IS GAY.


SURE. MOSTLY. HE REALLY LIKES ME. HE SAYS I REMIND HIM OF A DRAG QUEEN. HE SAYS HE'S GOING TO SET UP A GOOGLEBOMB, SO THAT IF YOU TYPE IN "NEW YORK PARTIES" IT WILL PUT ME FIRST.
SO YOU'LL BE ORGANIZING PARTIES FOR THE MAYOR'S OFFICE? AIN'T GONNA HAPPEN, SIRCE.
NINE HUNDRED BUCKS. C'MON, BABES. I'LL GIVE IT BACK TO YOU.
HOW? YOU WERE FIRED FROM THE BOOKSHOP. YOU CAN'T PAY ME BACK.


IF I WAS HOMELESS, I'D JUST SHOW UP HERE AND THEN YOU'D HAVE ME LIVING HERE ALL THE TIME AND I'D EAT ALL YOUR FOOD AND I'D STEAL YOUR BOYFRIEND AGAIN,
AND THEN YOU'D THROW ME OUT IN THE STREET AND I'D DIE AND YOU'D BE LIKE, OHMY-GODSHEJUSTDIED,
AND THEN YOU'D LIKE JOIN A CONVENT OR SET UP A CHARITY OR SOMETHING,
AND YOUR LIFE WOULD BE RUINED BY GUILT WHICH WOULD COST YOU LIKE MUCH MORE THAN NINE HUNDRED DOLLARS.

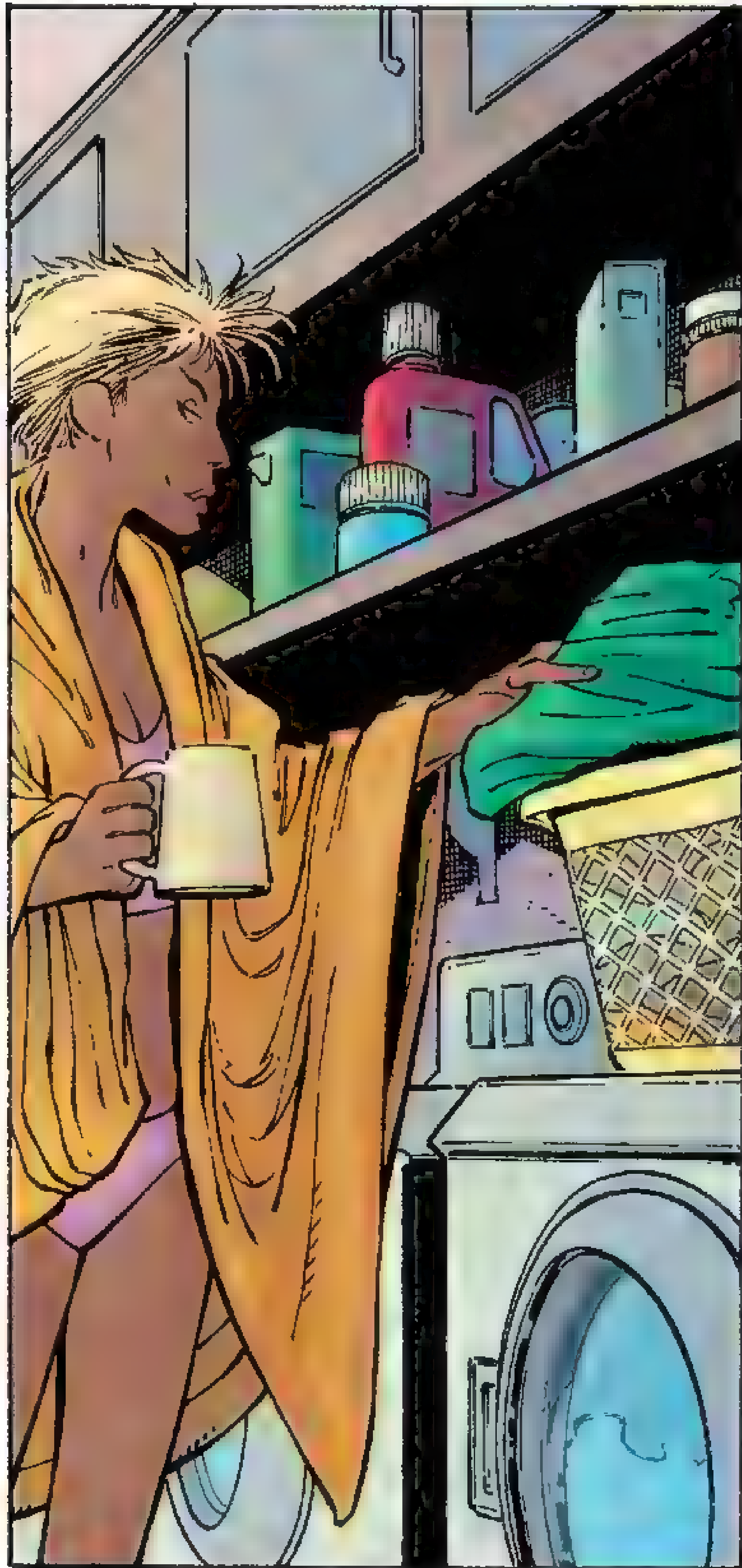

OKAY. OKAY. WHEN DO I GET IT BACK?
HOLD ON.

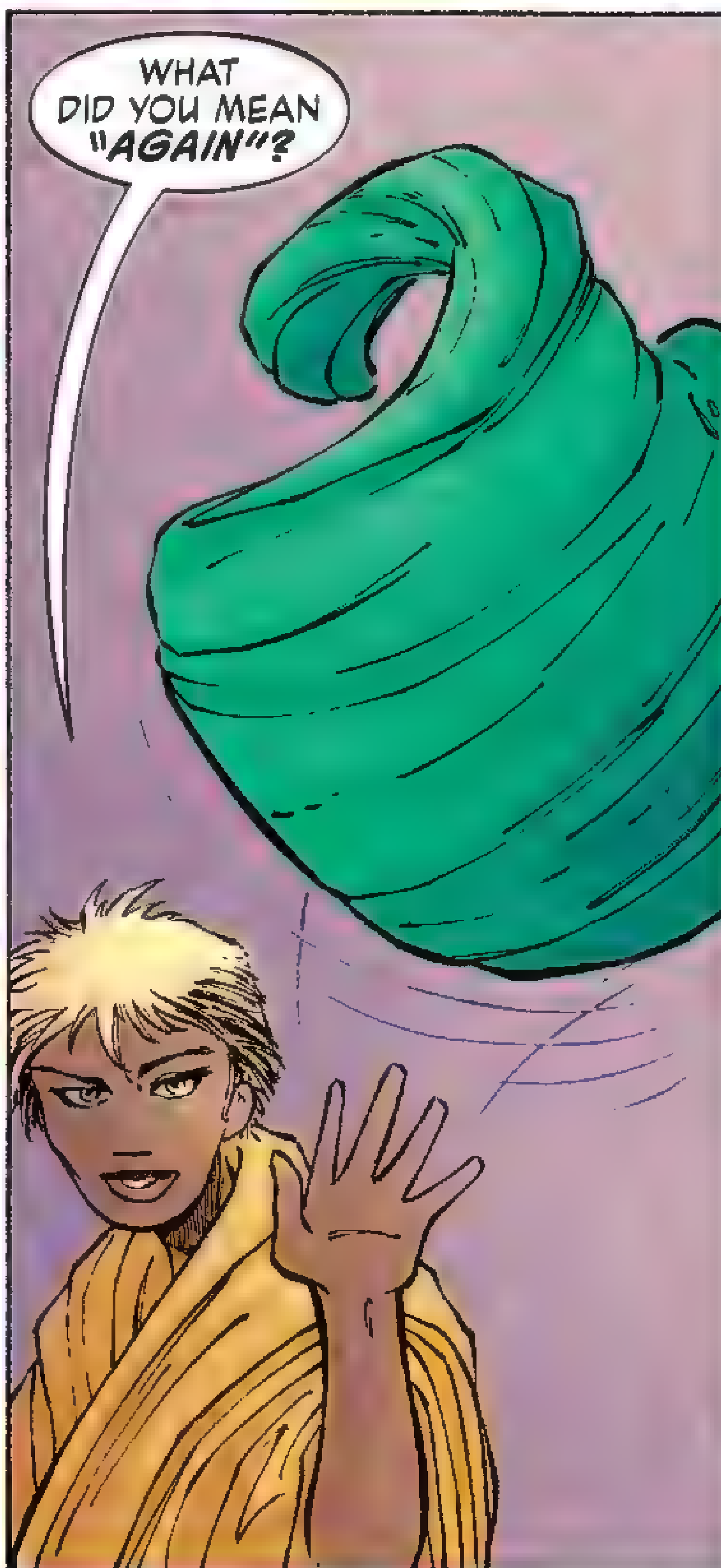

HI.
THEY DID?
THEY DO?
WHERE IS IT?


JEEZABEEZA.
OKAY. TELL HIM I'LL BE THERE.


I NEED TO BORROW YOUR GREEN TOP. I GOTTA LOOK PROFESSIONAL.


WHY?
THAT WAS TODD. THE VOROZHEIKAN EMBASSY EMAILED *PARTIESBYSERSI-DOTCOM*. AND SERSI'S GOING IN FOR A MEETING.




WHAT DID YOU MEAN ***"AGAIN"***?


WHAT?
YOU SAID "STEAL MY BOYFRIEND AGAIN"?

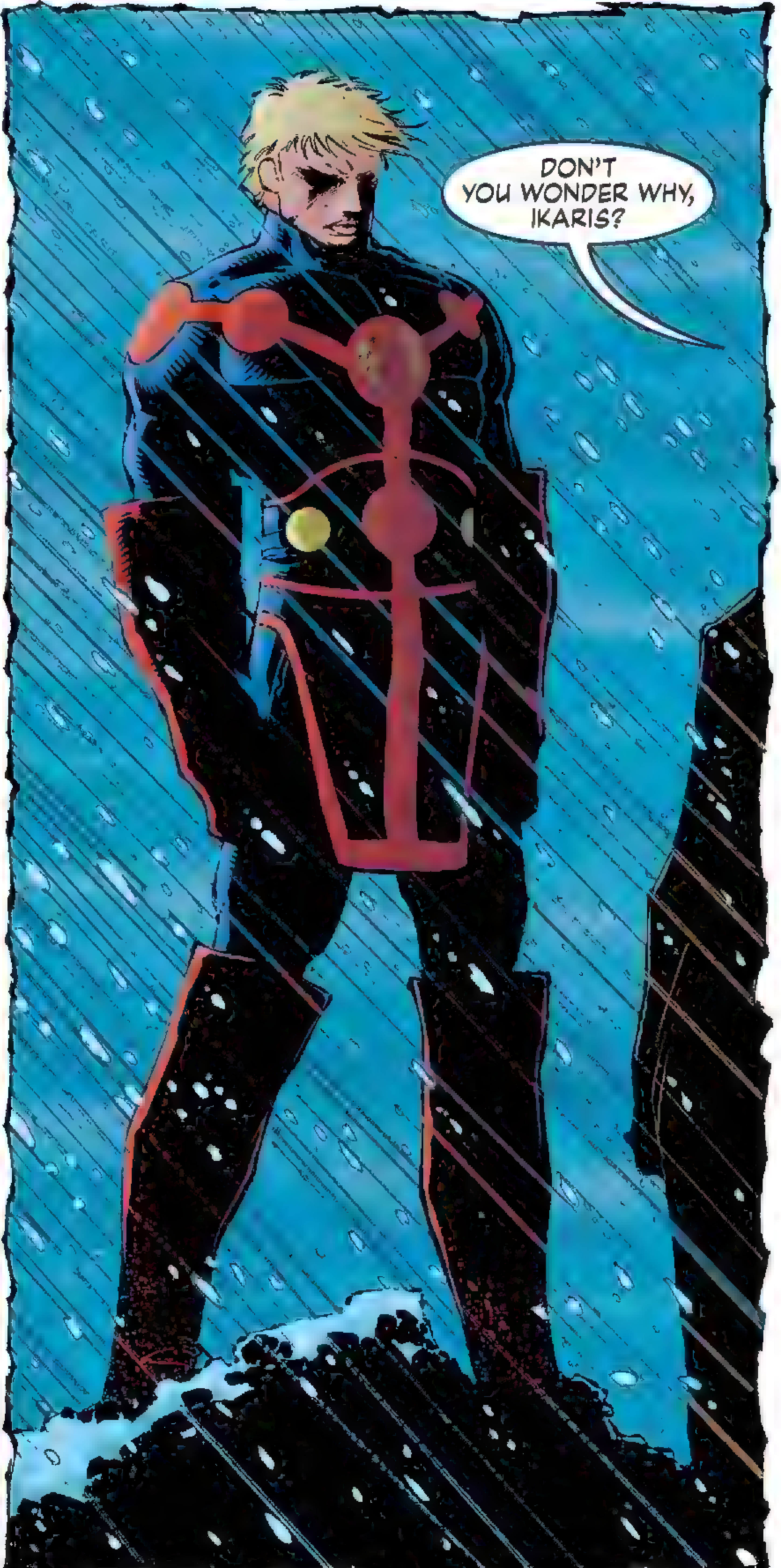

IT'S JUST AN EXPRESSION. LIKE, YOU KNOW, "*RAINING CATS AND DOGS.*" AND YOUR UMBRELLA. YOU DON'T MIND IF I BORROW YOUR UMBRELLA?
AND IF ANYONE CALLS HERE FROM THE VOROZHEIKAN EMBASSY ASKING FOR REFERENCES, JUST TELL THEM HOW WELL I ORGANIZED ***YOUR*** LAST PARTY. OKAY?


AND ABI...
...WHERE'S ***VOROZHEIKA?***




"HERE WE ARE AGAIN, IKARIS. ANOTHER HIGH, COLD PLACE."


"OF COURSE, THENA. WE LIKE IT HERE."
"OUR PEOPLE HEAD FOR MOUNTAINTOPS LIKE RABBITS SEEK THEIR WARRENS, OR THE GREAT SQUID SEEK THE OCEAN ABYSS."


DON'T YOU WONDER WHY, IKARIS?

WHY? BECAUSE THE TEMPERATURES ARE BRACING; WE THINK MORE CLEARLY WHEN IT IS VERY COLD. THE AIR IS THIN, HERE, AND COMFORTABLE. THE OTHER CREATURES OF THIS EARTH LEAVE US ALONE.

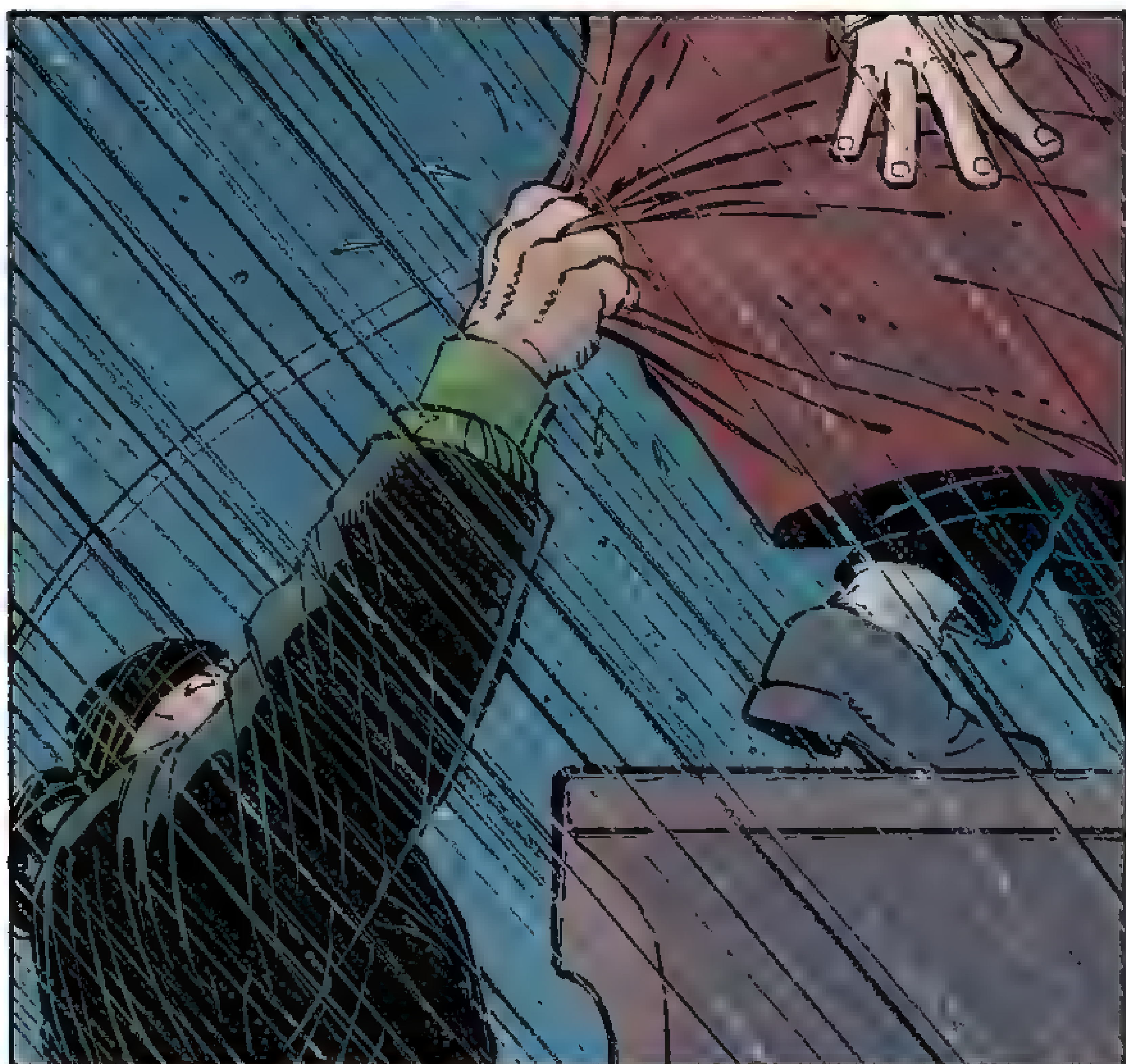
THEY LEAVE US ALONE BECAUSE *THEY* ARE ADAPTED TO THE WARMER PLACES. WHY ARE *WE* AT HOME HERE?

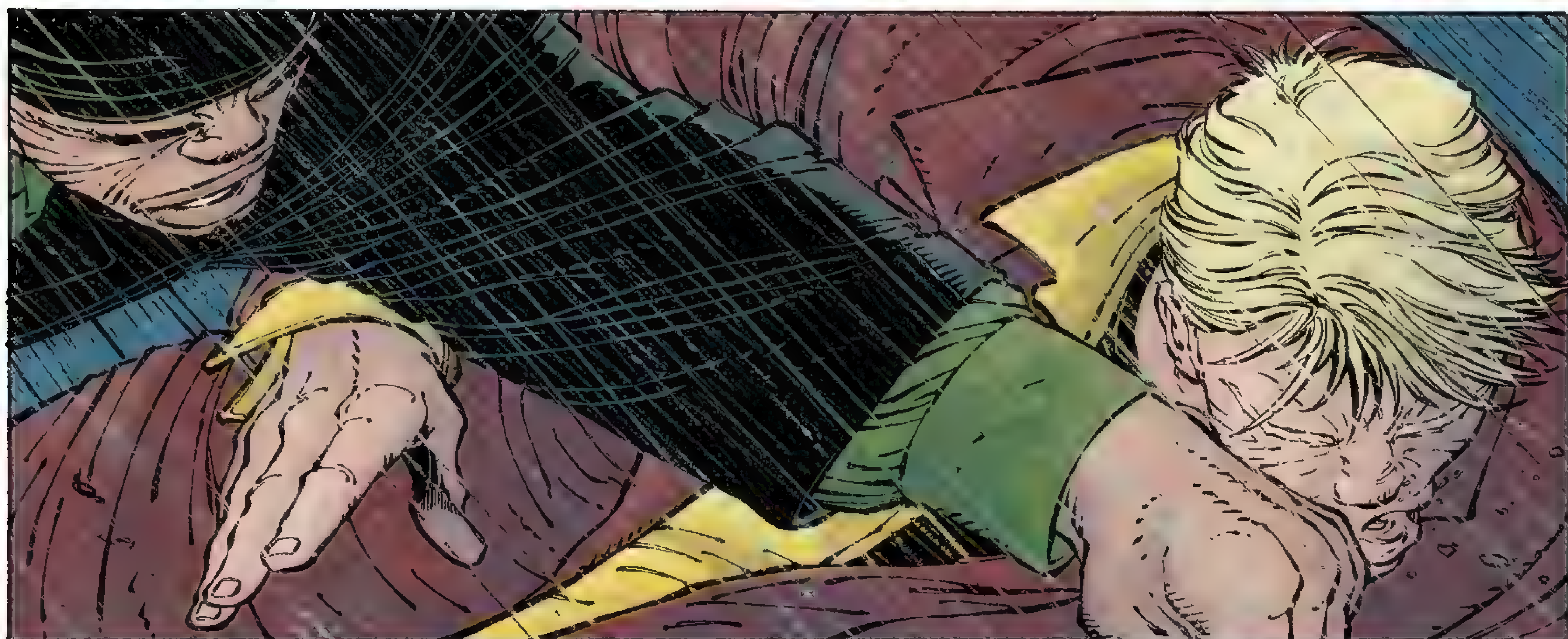
BECAUSE IT IS OUR *NATURE.*

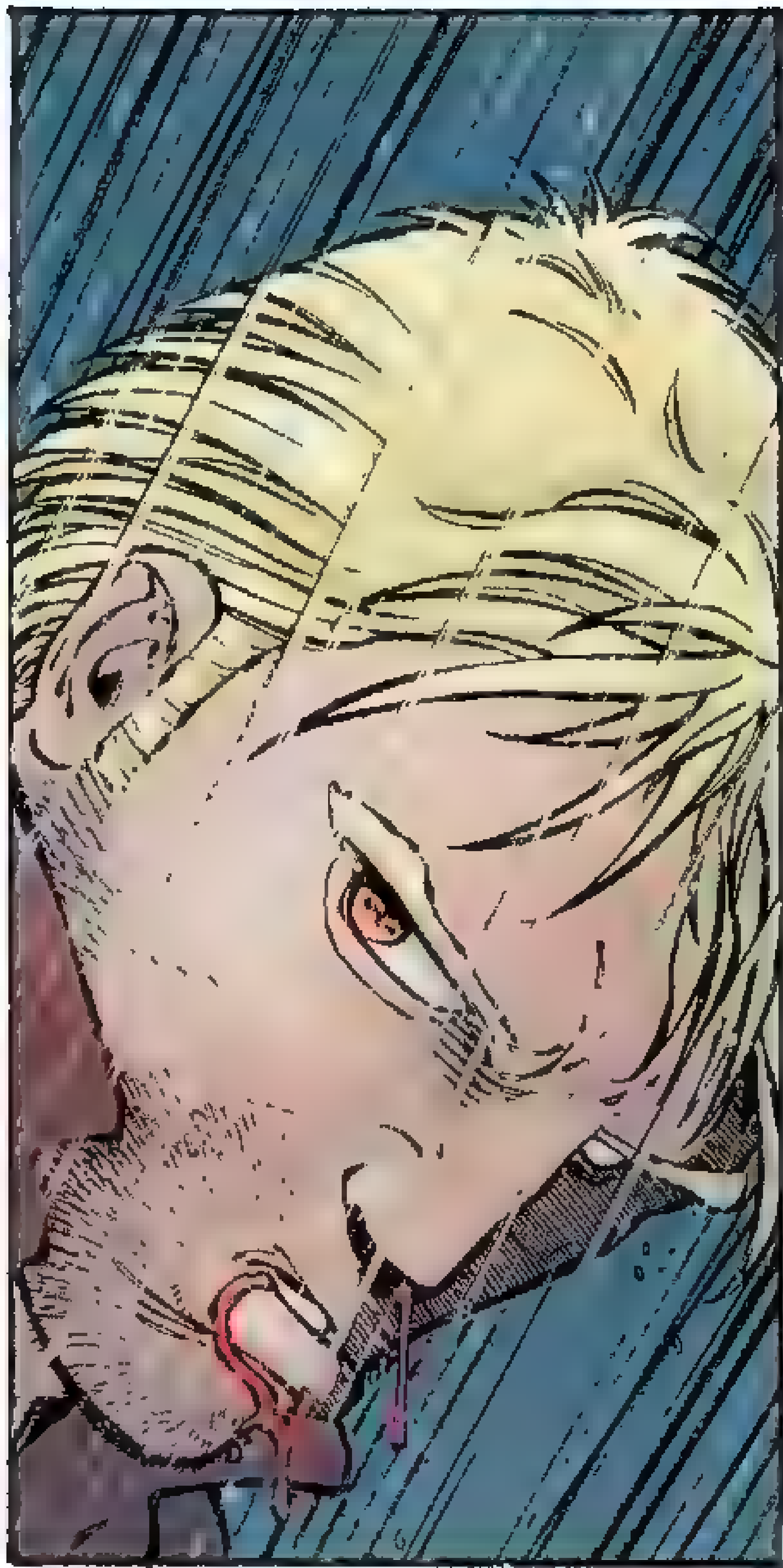
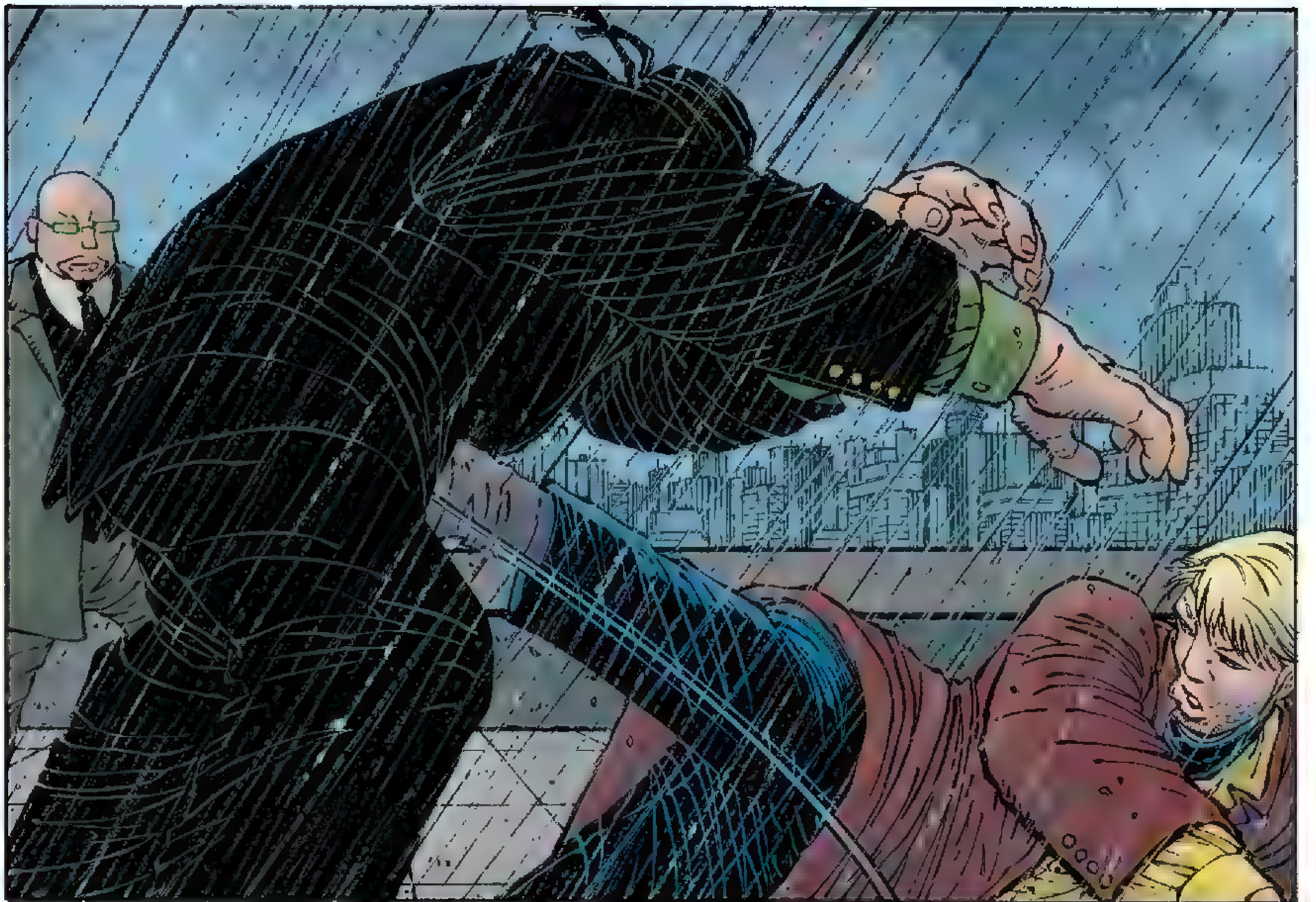
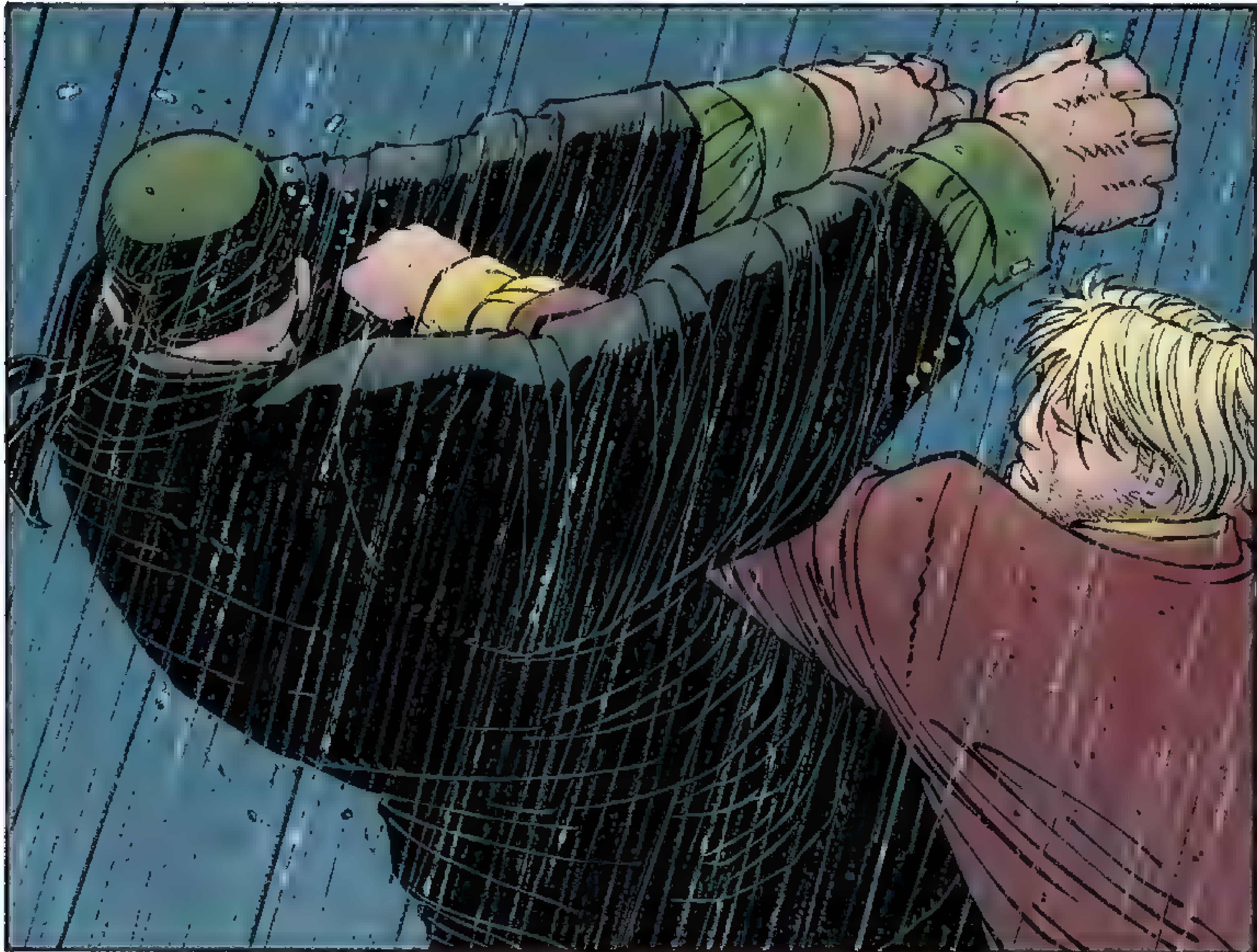
WHAT NONSENSE. THAT IS LIKE SAYING, IT IS THE NATURE OF A SEAL TO LIVE IN THE SEA.

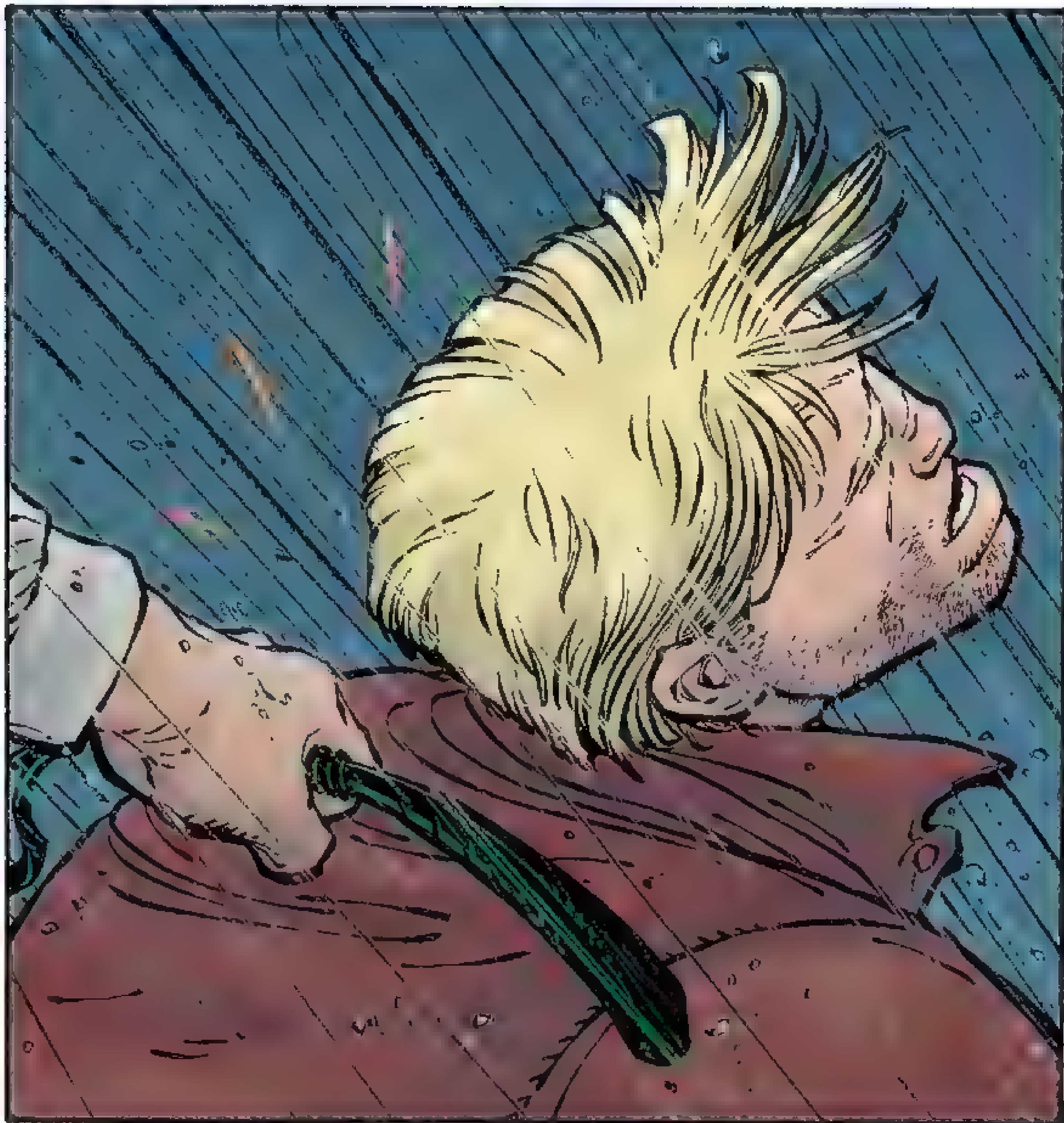
WELL, IT *IS.*

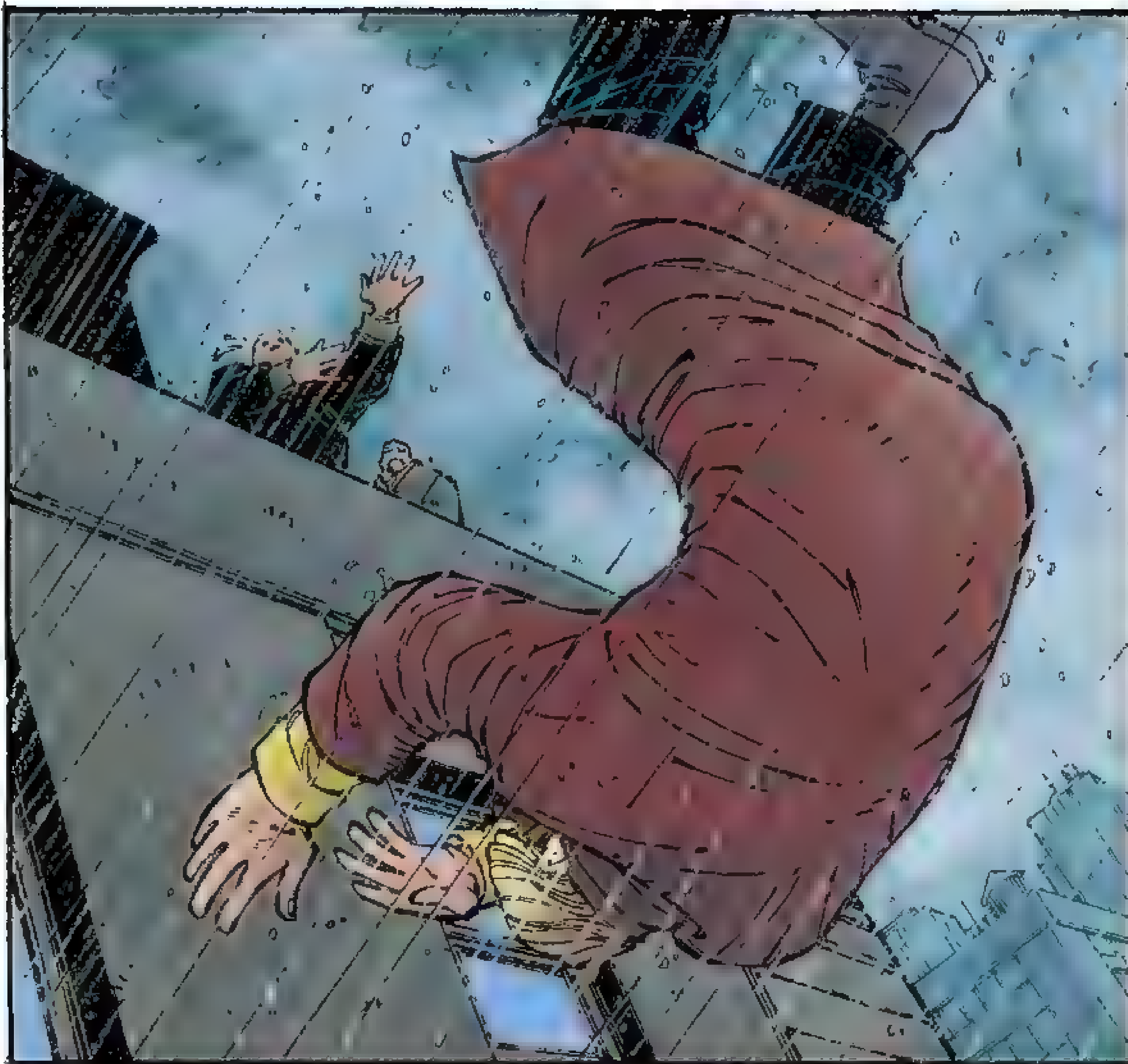
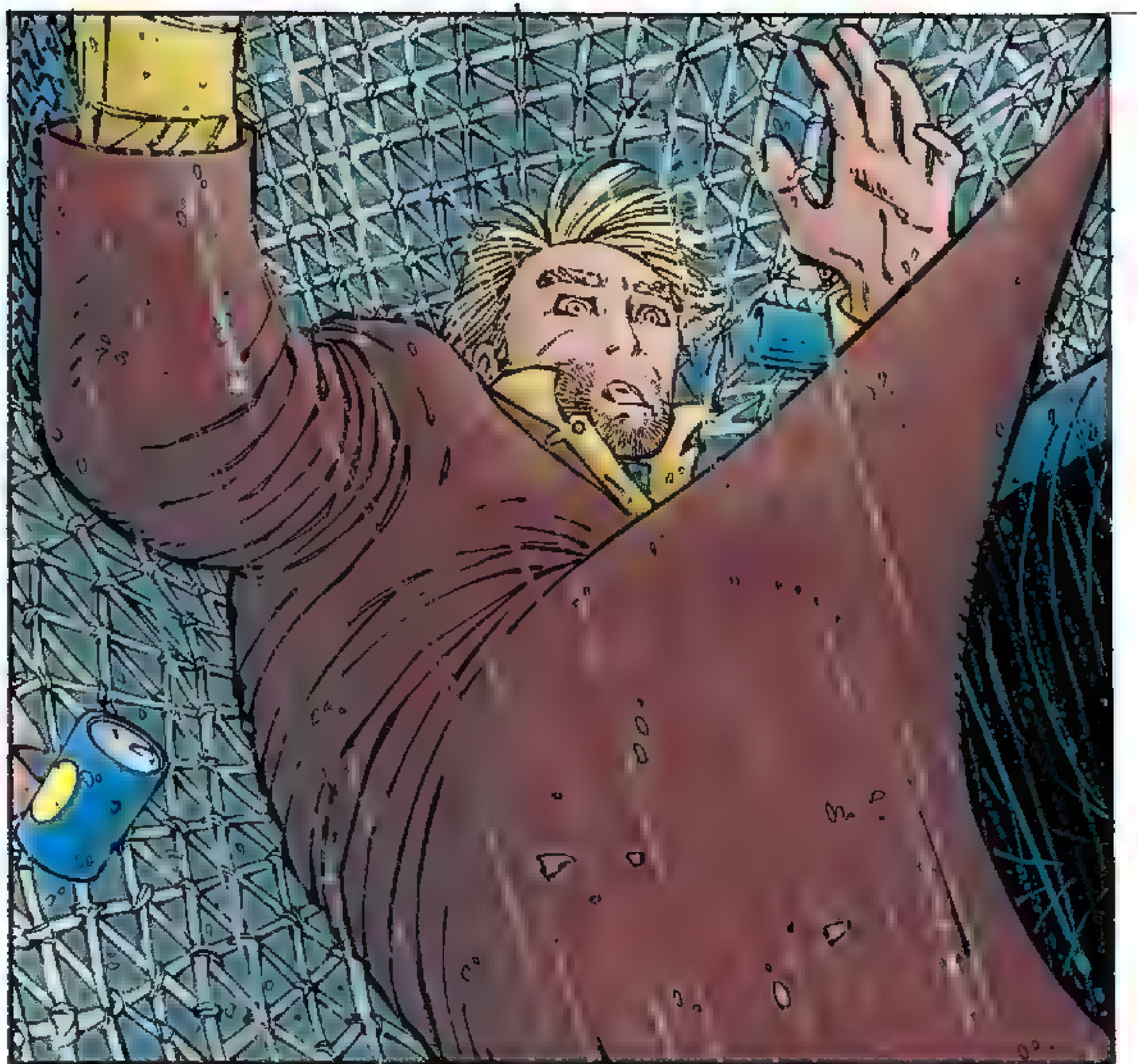
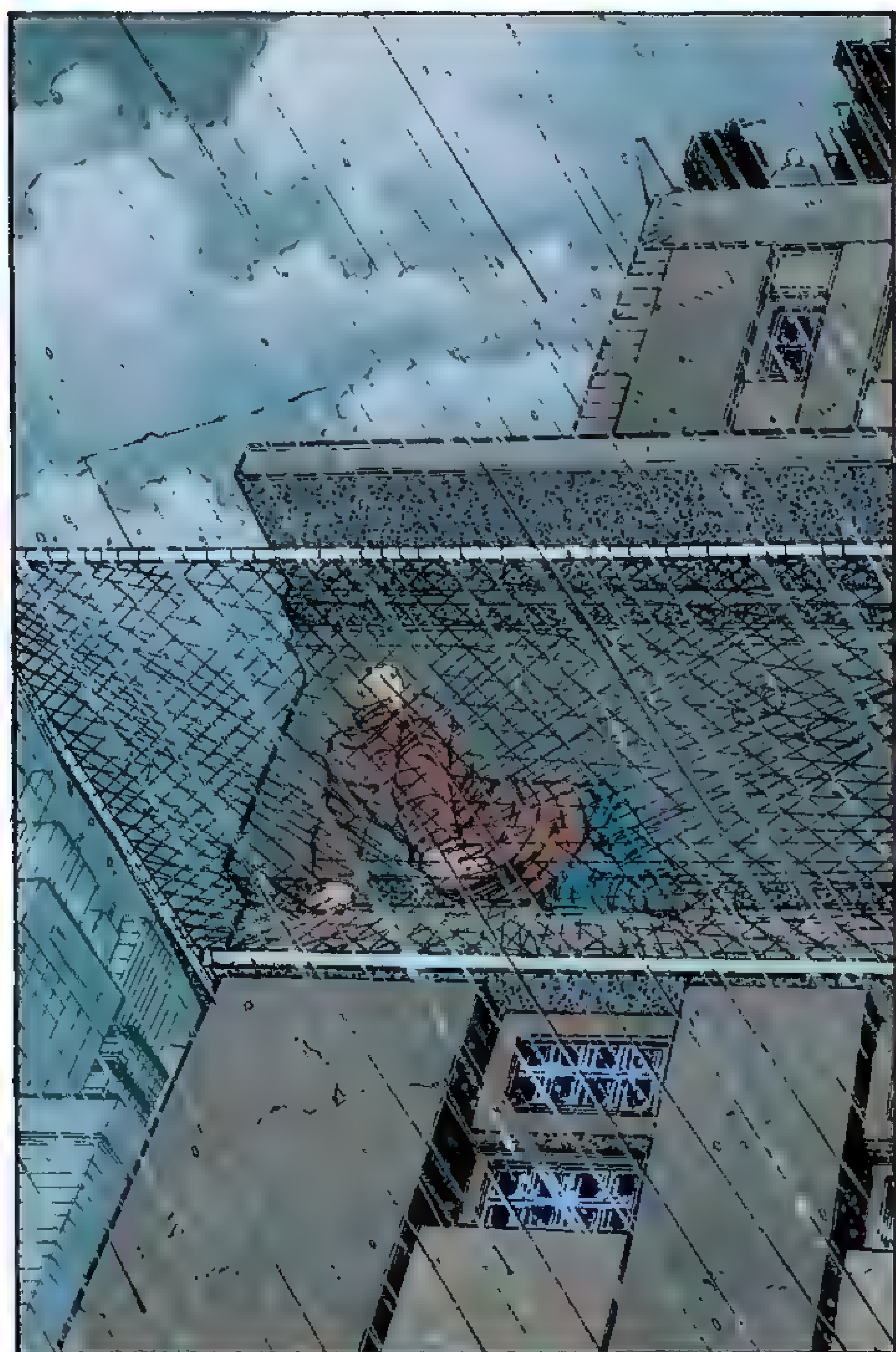
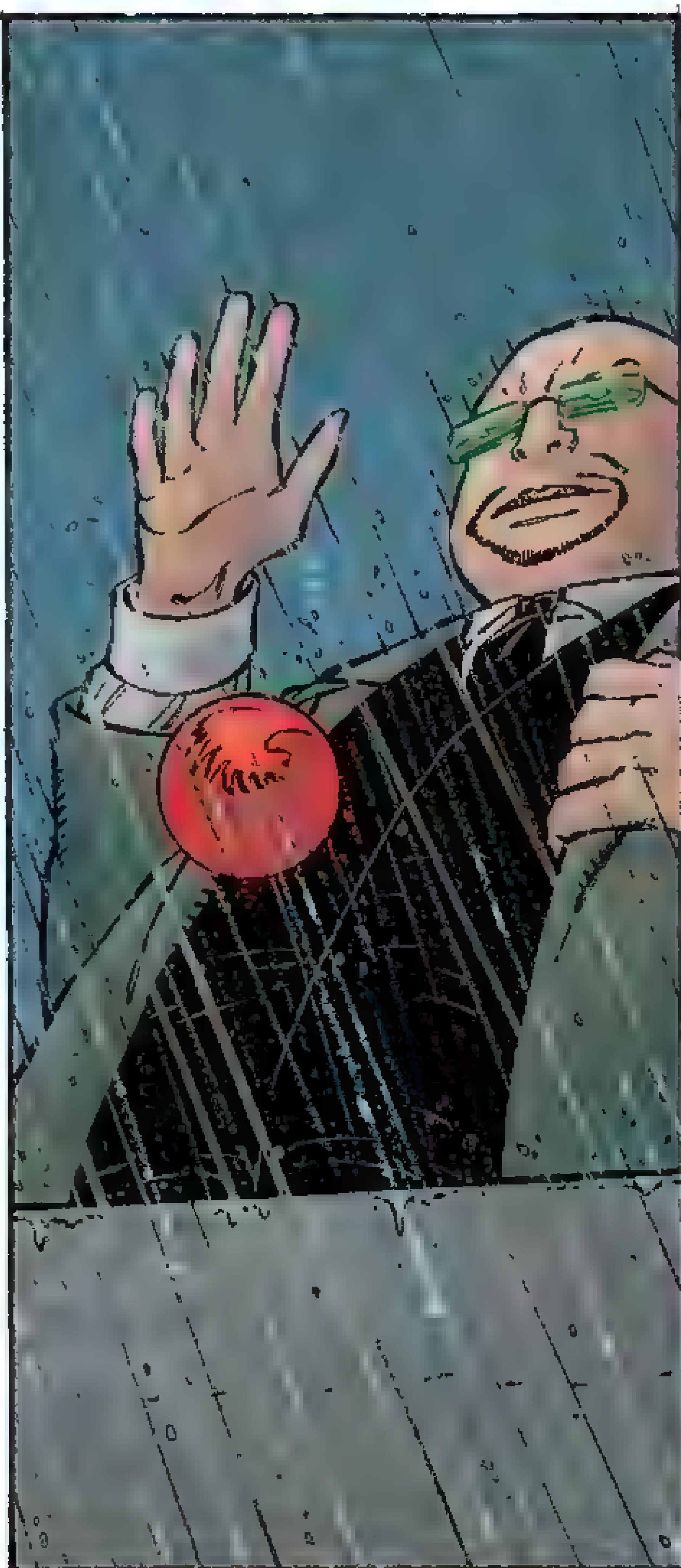
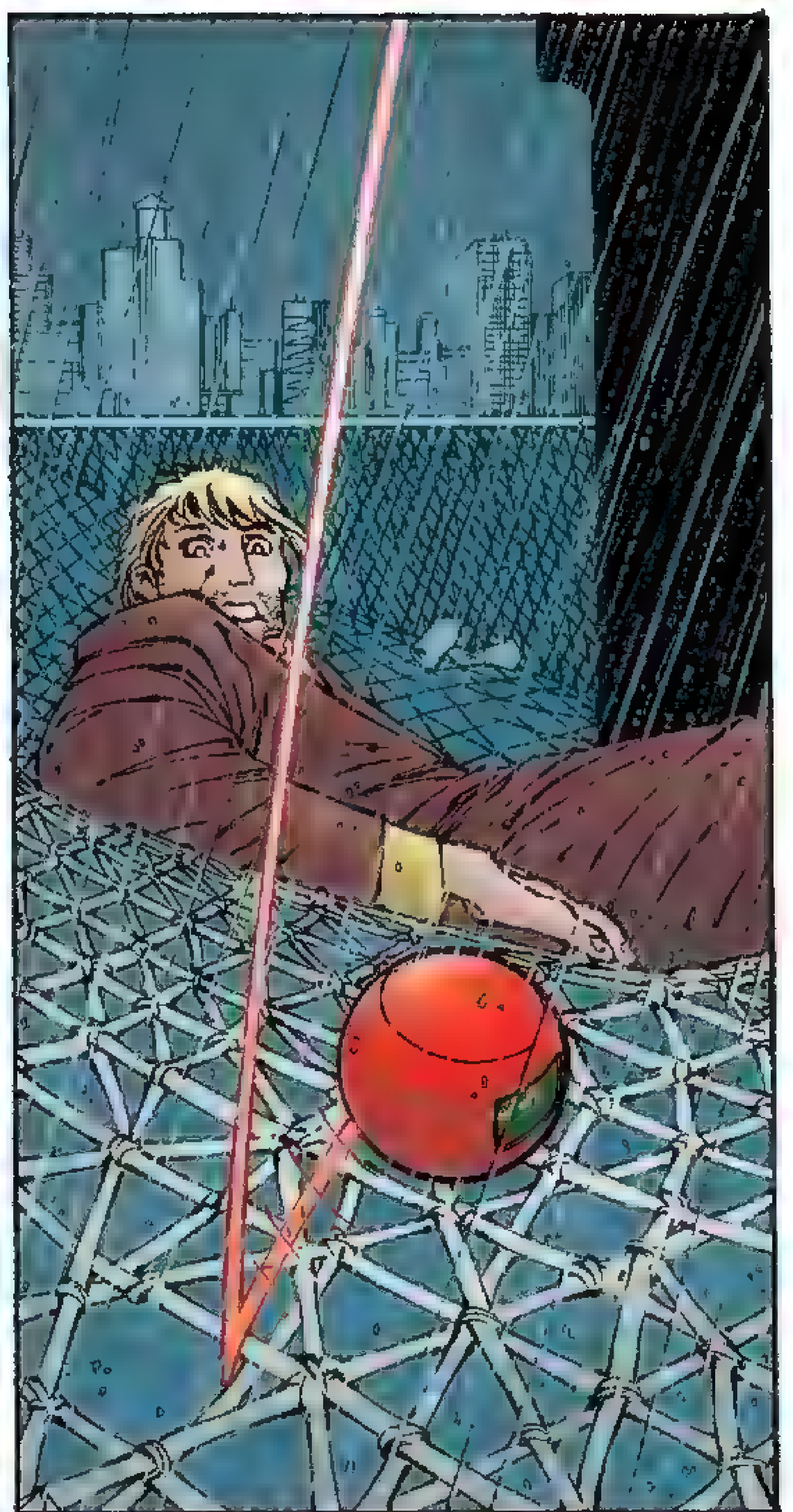
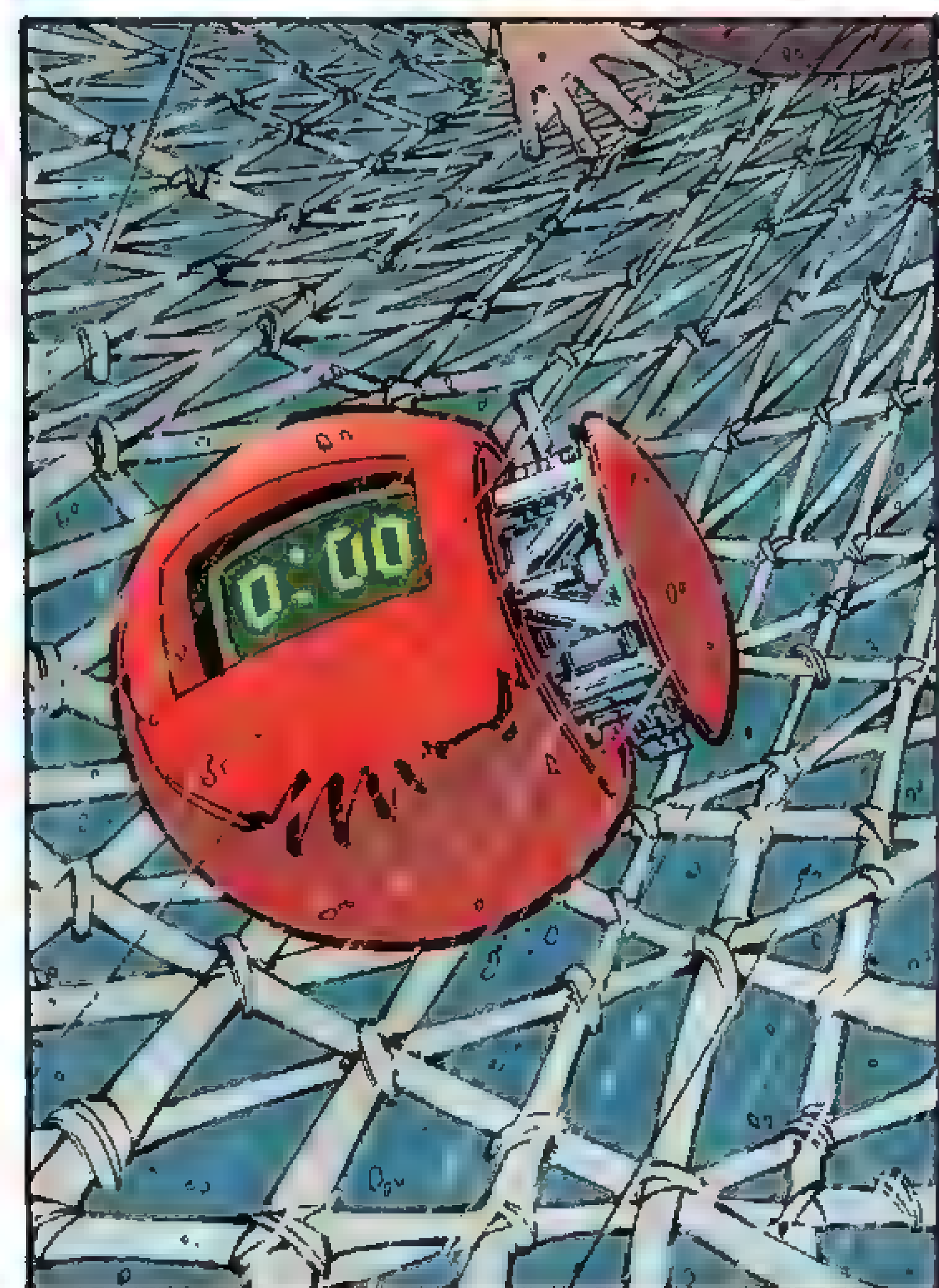
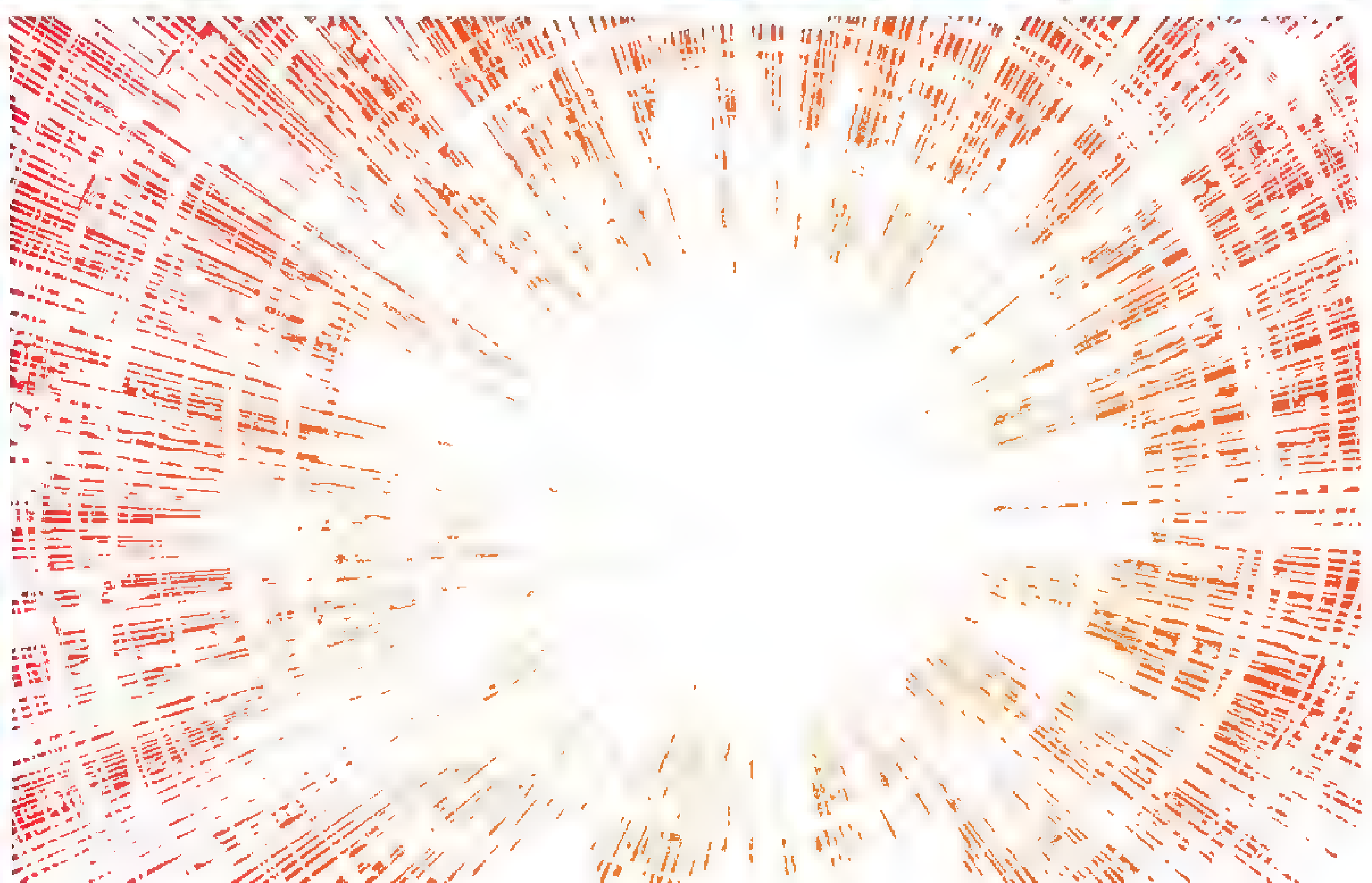
THE ANCESTORS OF THE SEALS WALKED ON LAND, AND MERELY FISHED THE WATER, LIKE SEA-OTTERS. YOU ARE A SWEET MAN AND A DELIGHTFUL BEDMATE, IKARIS. BUT YOU DO NOT *THINK.*

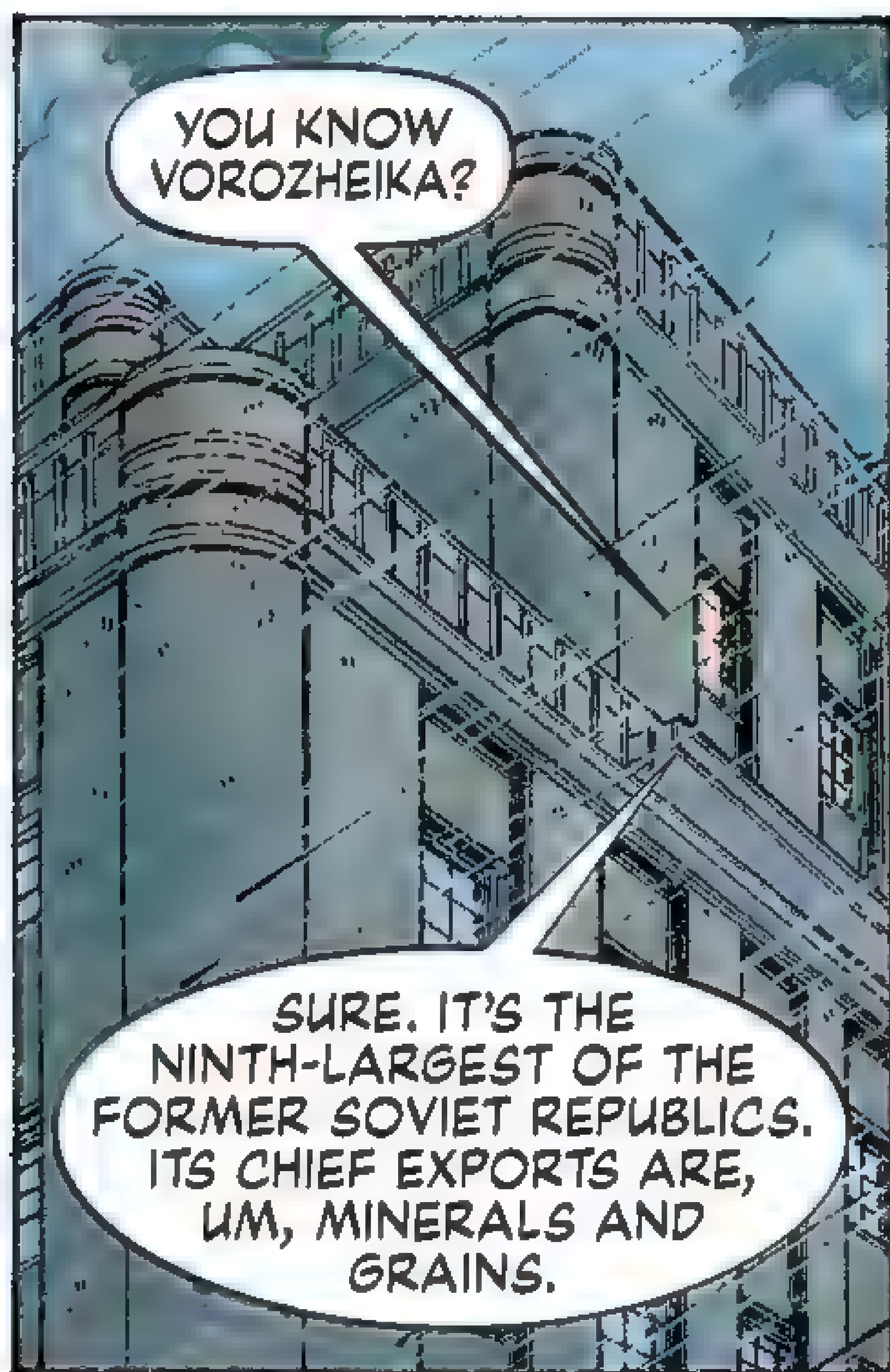

MR. HARRIS? IKE HARRIS.
YEAH. DO I KNOW YOU?
JUST WANTED TO BE SURE. GET HIM.


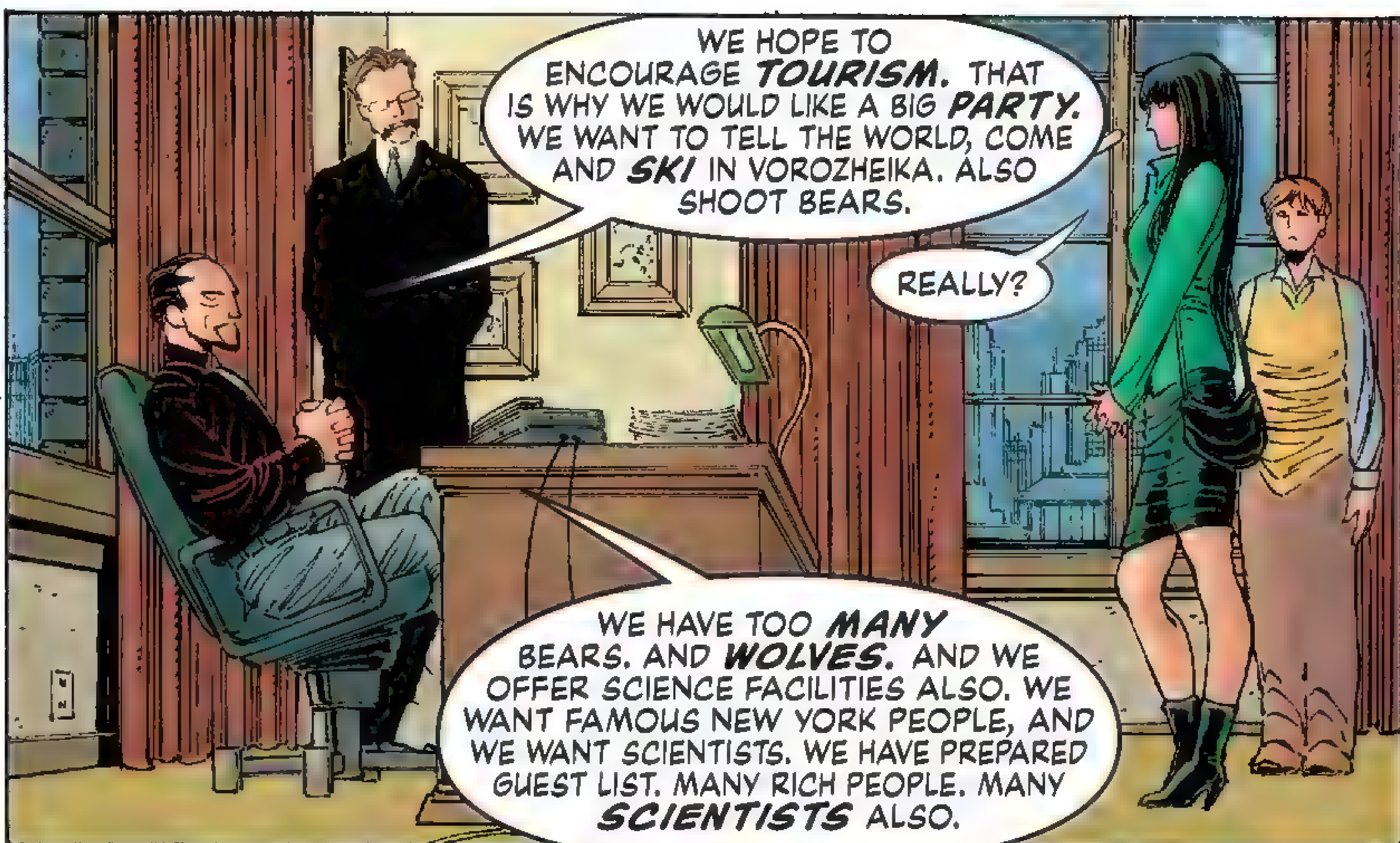












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YOU KNOW VOROZHEIKA?
SURE. IT'S THE NINTH-LARGEST OF THE FORMER SOVIET REPUBLICS. ITS CHIEF EXPORTS ARE, UM, MINERALS AND GRAINS.


WE HOPE TO ENCOURAGE TOURISM. THAT IS WHY WE WOULD LIKE A BIG PARTY. WE WANT TO TELL THE WORLD, COME AND SKI IN VOROZHEIKA. ALSO SHOOT BEARS.
REALLY?
WE HAVE TOO MANY BEARS. AND WOLVES. AND WE OFFER SCIENCE FACILITIES ALSO. WE WANT FAMOUS NEW YORK PEOPLE, AND WE WANT SCIENTISTS. WE HAVE PREPARED GUEST LIST. MANY RICH PEOPLE. MANY SCIENTISTS ALSO.


YOU CAN GET THESE PEOPLE TO COME?
I CAN MAKE THEM DO ANYTHING I WANT.
IT WILL BE THE PARTY OF THE SEASON.
AFTER, NOBODY WILL SAY, WHERE IS VOROZHEIKA? THE PARTY BUDGET IS TWO HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS. YOUR FEE IS TWENTY THOUSAND. YES?

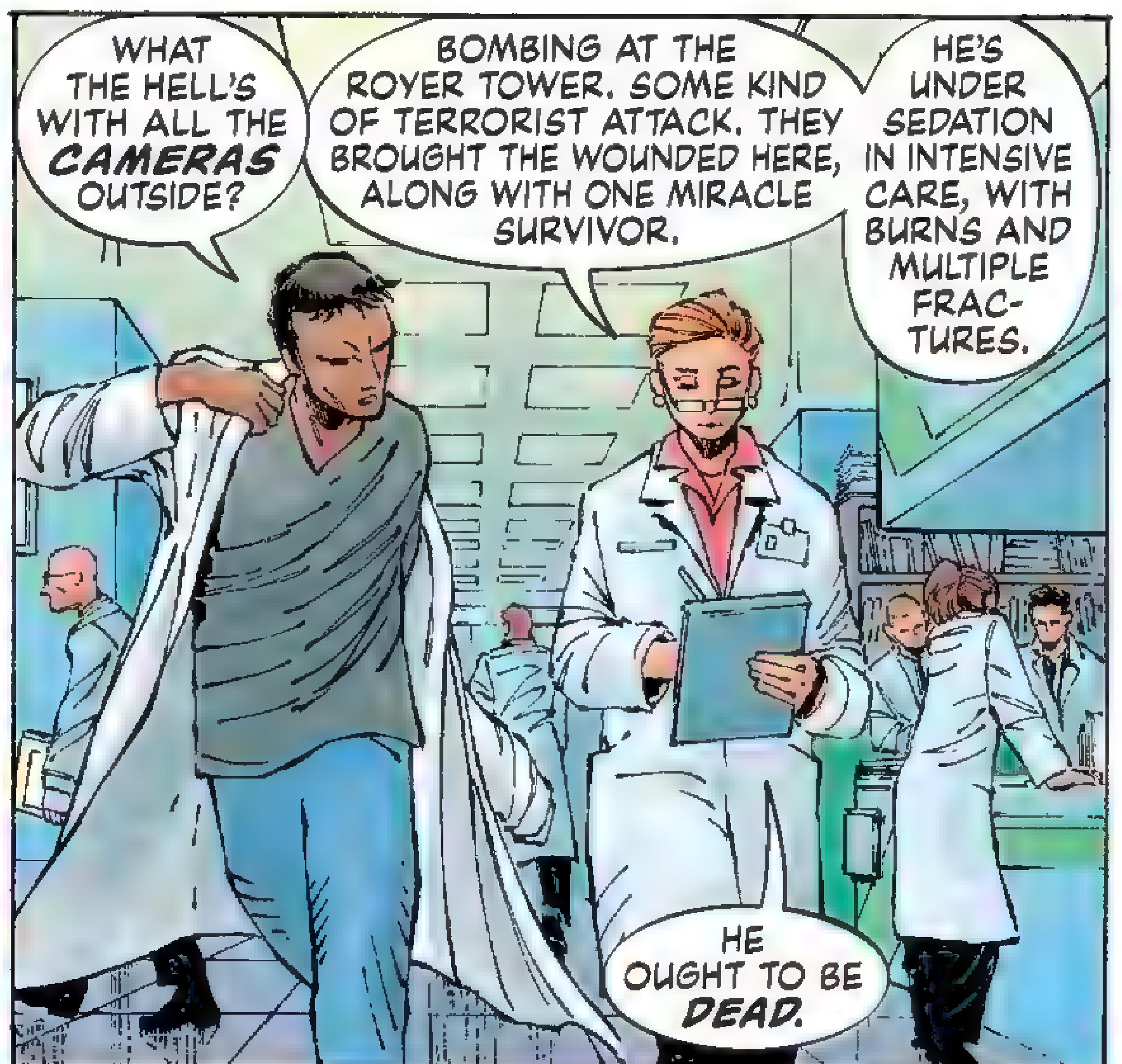

FOR THAT KIND OF MONEY I CAN GIVE YOU A PARTY YOU'LL NEVER FORGET, MR. DRUIG.

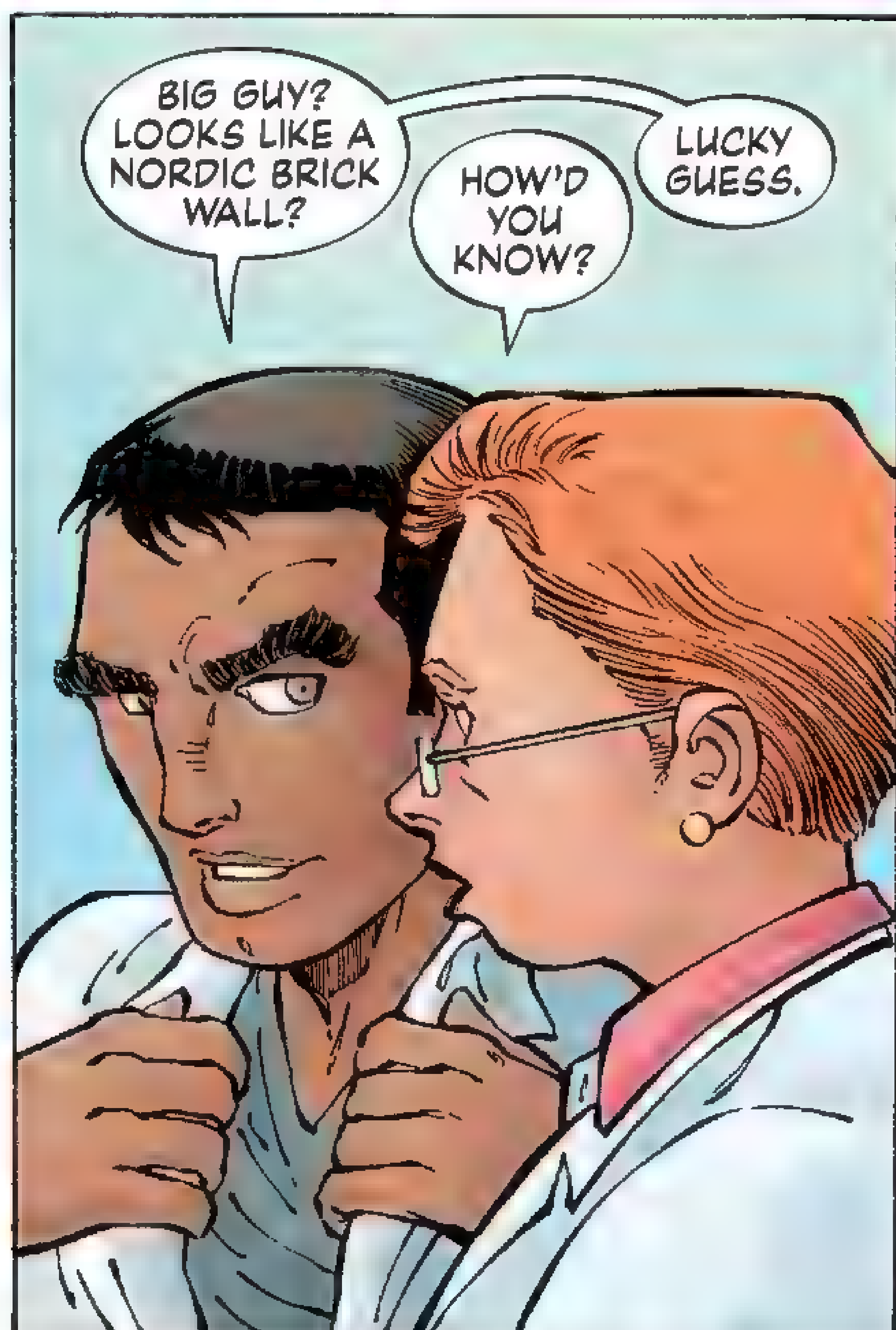

LUDMILLA HERE WILL TAKE YOU AND GIVE YOU MONEY, AND OUR LIST OF GUESTS WE WANT TO SEE.
COME WITH ME.

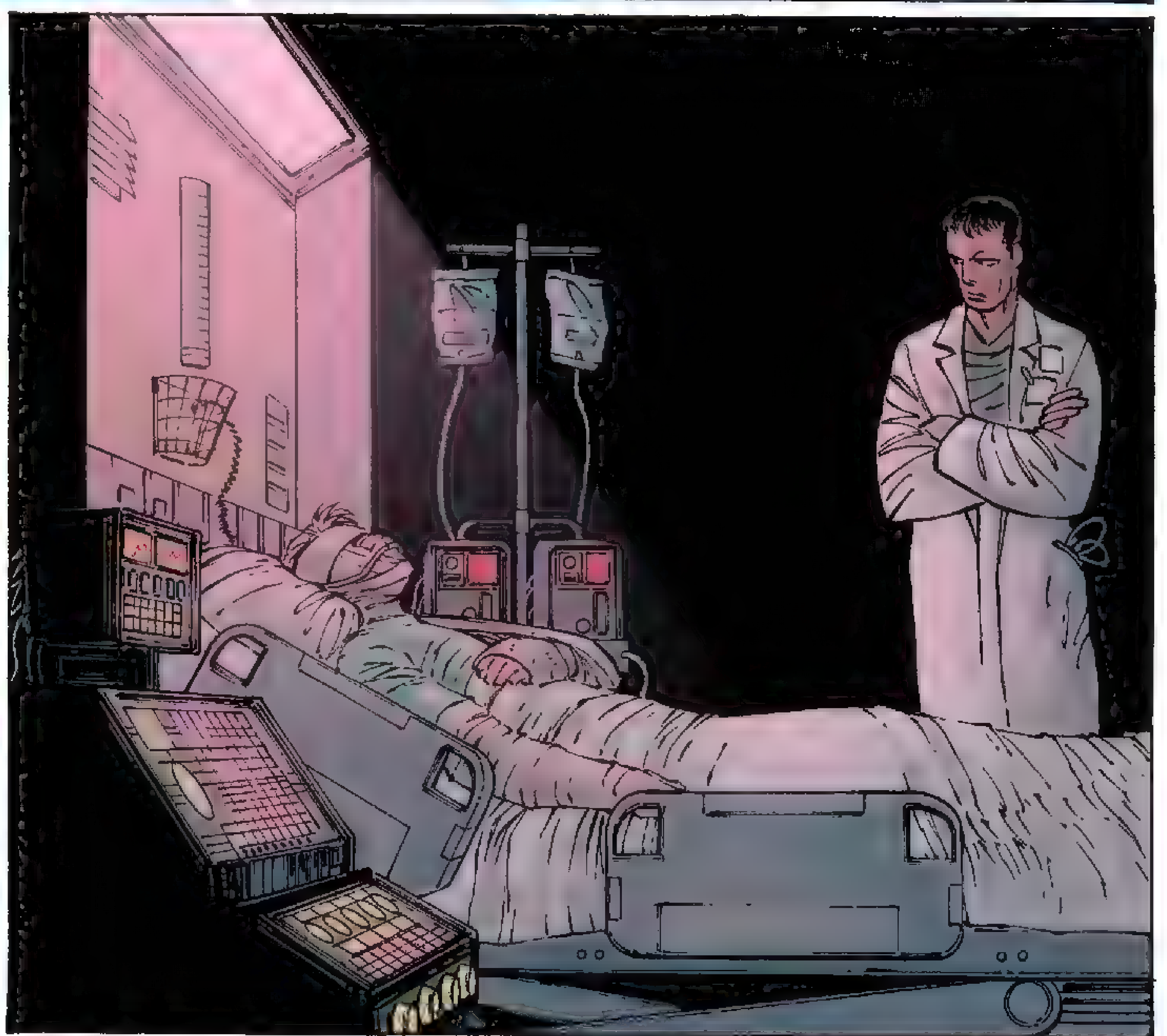

I STILL THINK IT'S TOO RISKY, DRUIG.
THAT IS BECAUSE YOU ARE A COWARD.
NO! BUT IF ANYONE IN MOSCOW FINDS OUT...
MOSCOW WON'T FIND OUT.


NOBODY WILL FIND OUT.
IT WILL ALL BE MOST... REGRETTABLE...


PLEASE LET ME THROUGH. I WORK HERE...
BELLEVUE HOSPITAL CENTER
EMERGENCY


WHAT THE HELL'S WITH ALL THE CAMERAS OUTSIDE?
BOMBING AT THE ROYER TOWER. SOME KIND OF TERRORIST ATTACK. THEY BROUGHT THE WOUNDED HERE, ALONG WITH ONE MIRACLE SURVIVOR.
HE'S UNDER SEDATION IN INTENSIVE CARE, WITH BURNS AND MULTIPLE FRAC-TURES.
HE OUGHT TO BE DEAD.

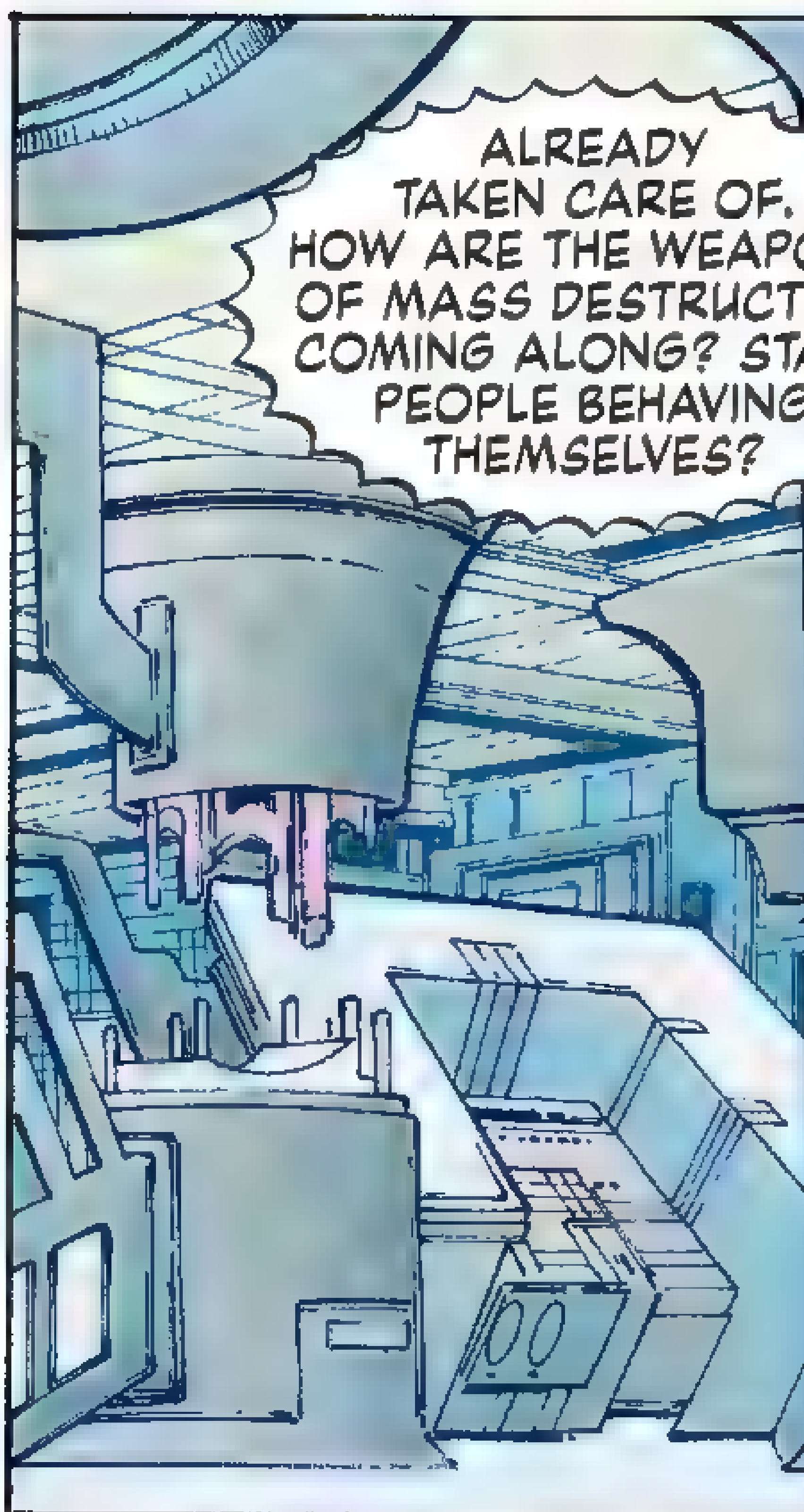

BIG GUY? LOOKS LIKE A NORDIC BRICK WALL?
HOW'D YOU KNOW?
LUCKY GUESS.




HI, MARK.

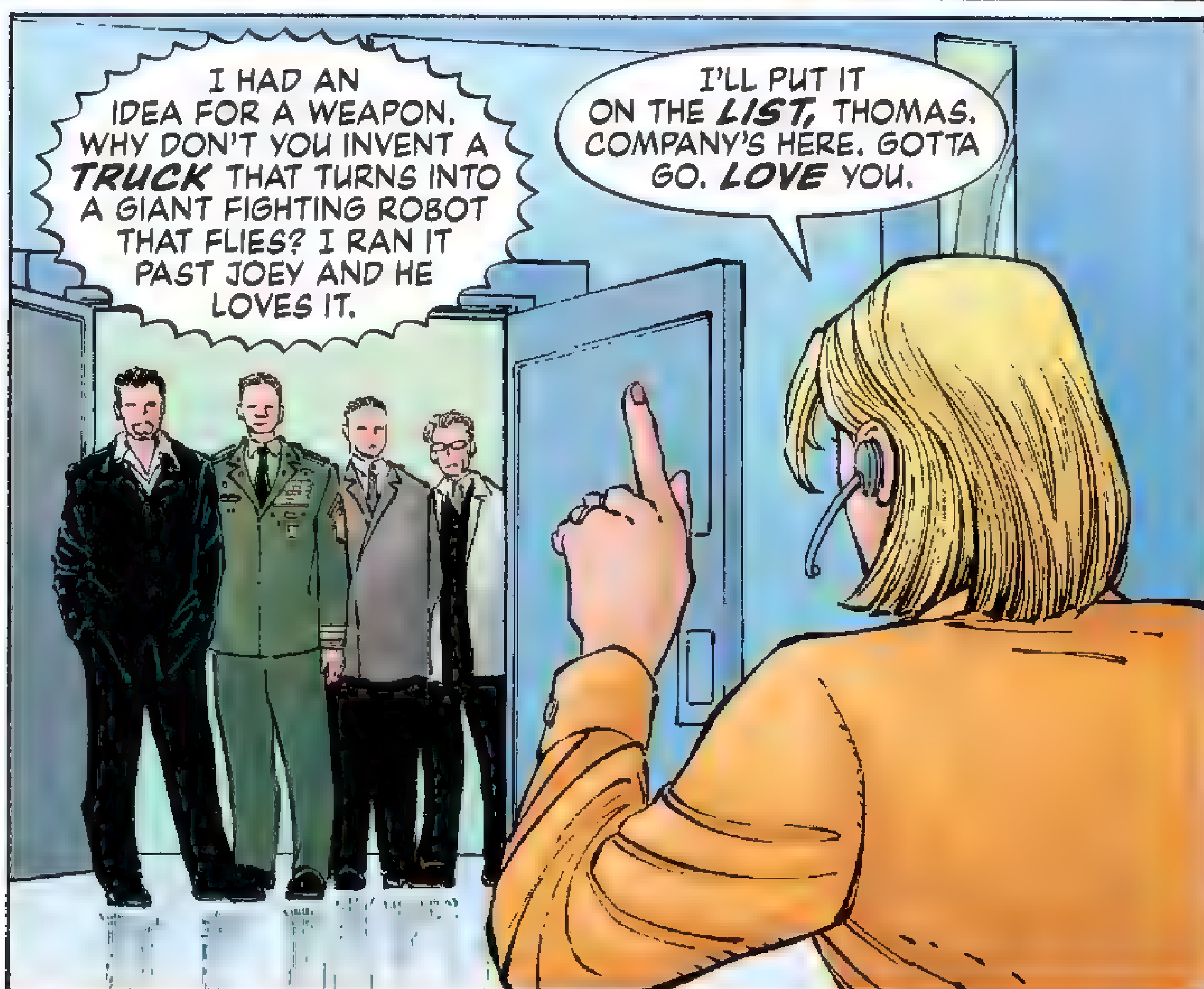

HOW DID YOU KNOW IT WAS ME?
I'VE KNOWN YOUR BREATHING PATTERNS FOR A VERY LONG TIME.
ARE YOU READY TO LISTEN?
I GUESS.
THEN COME BACK TOMORROW NIGHT. I NEED TIME TO HEAL.


"HON? I FORGOT TO TELL YOU THIS MORNING, WE'RE OUT OF KITCHEN TOWELS..."
STARK

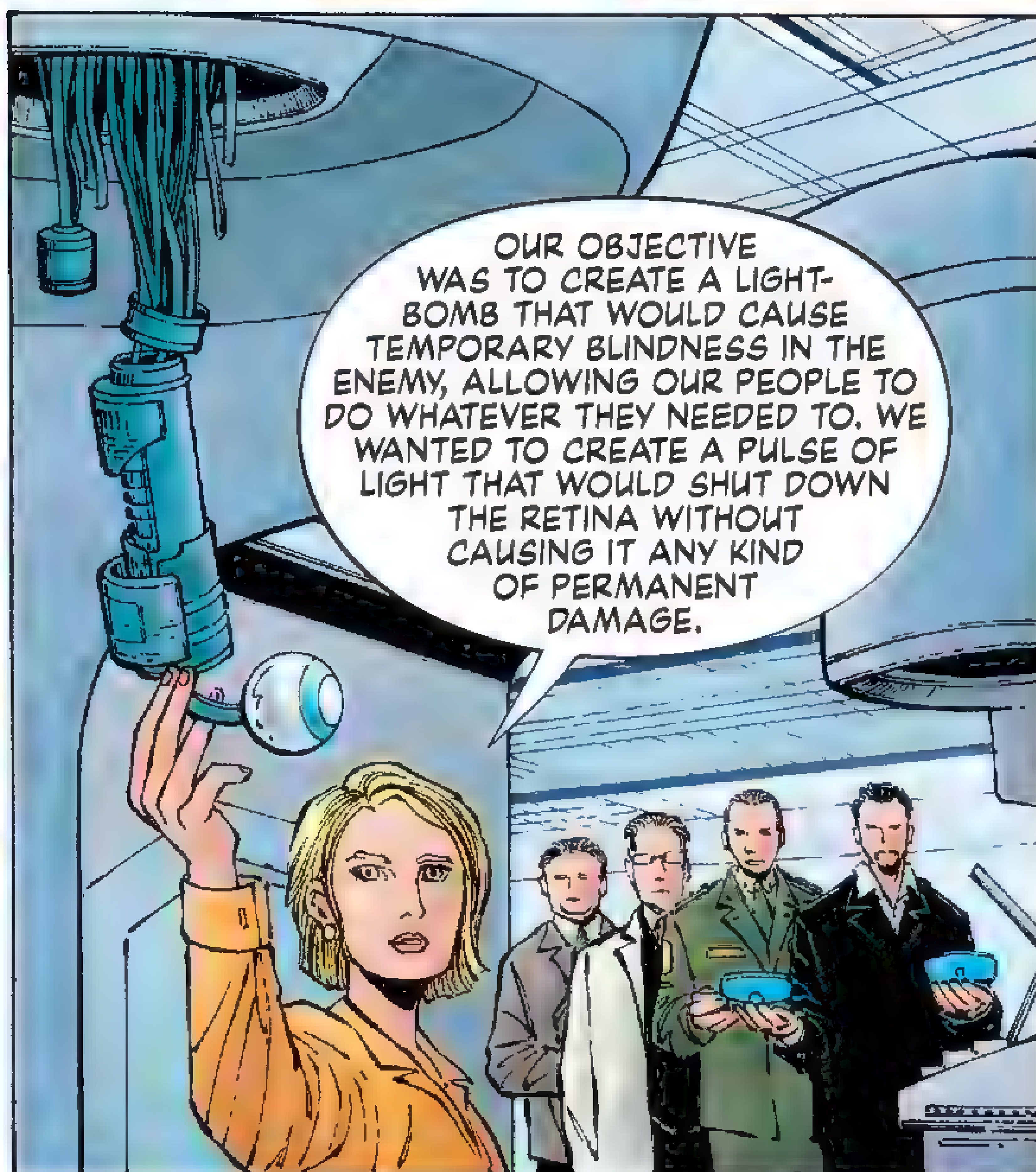

ALREADY TAKEN CARE OF. HOW ARE THE WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION COMING ALONG? STARK PEOPLE BEHAVING THEMSELVES?

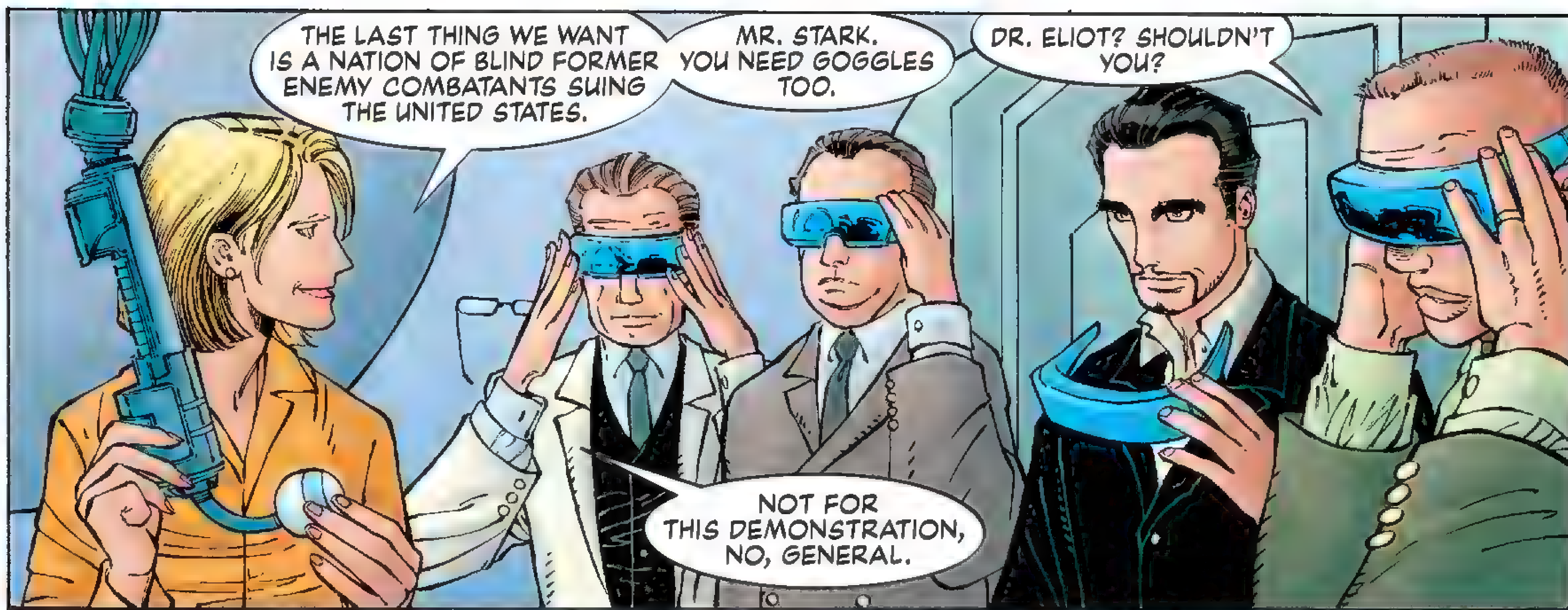
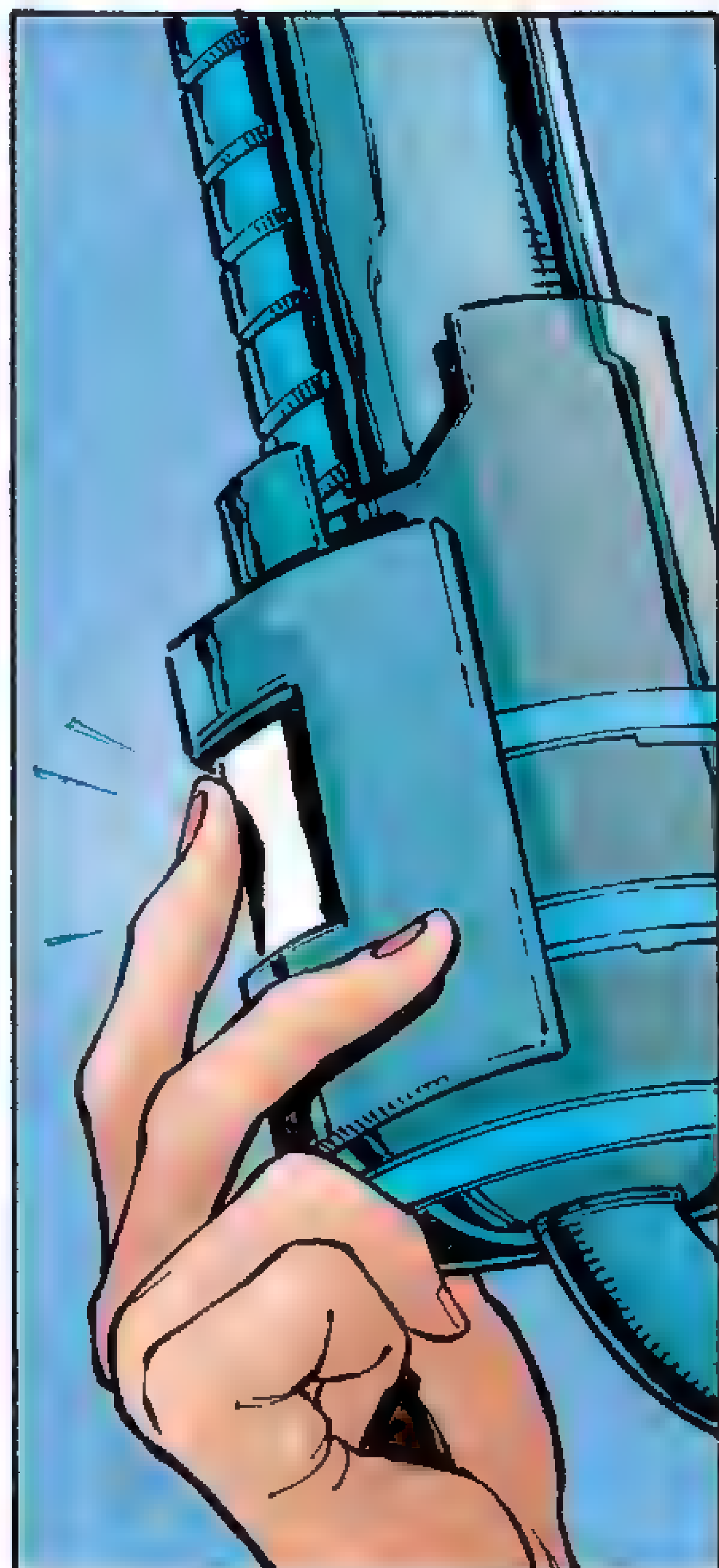
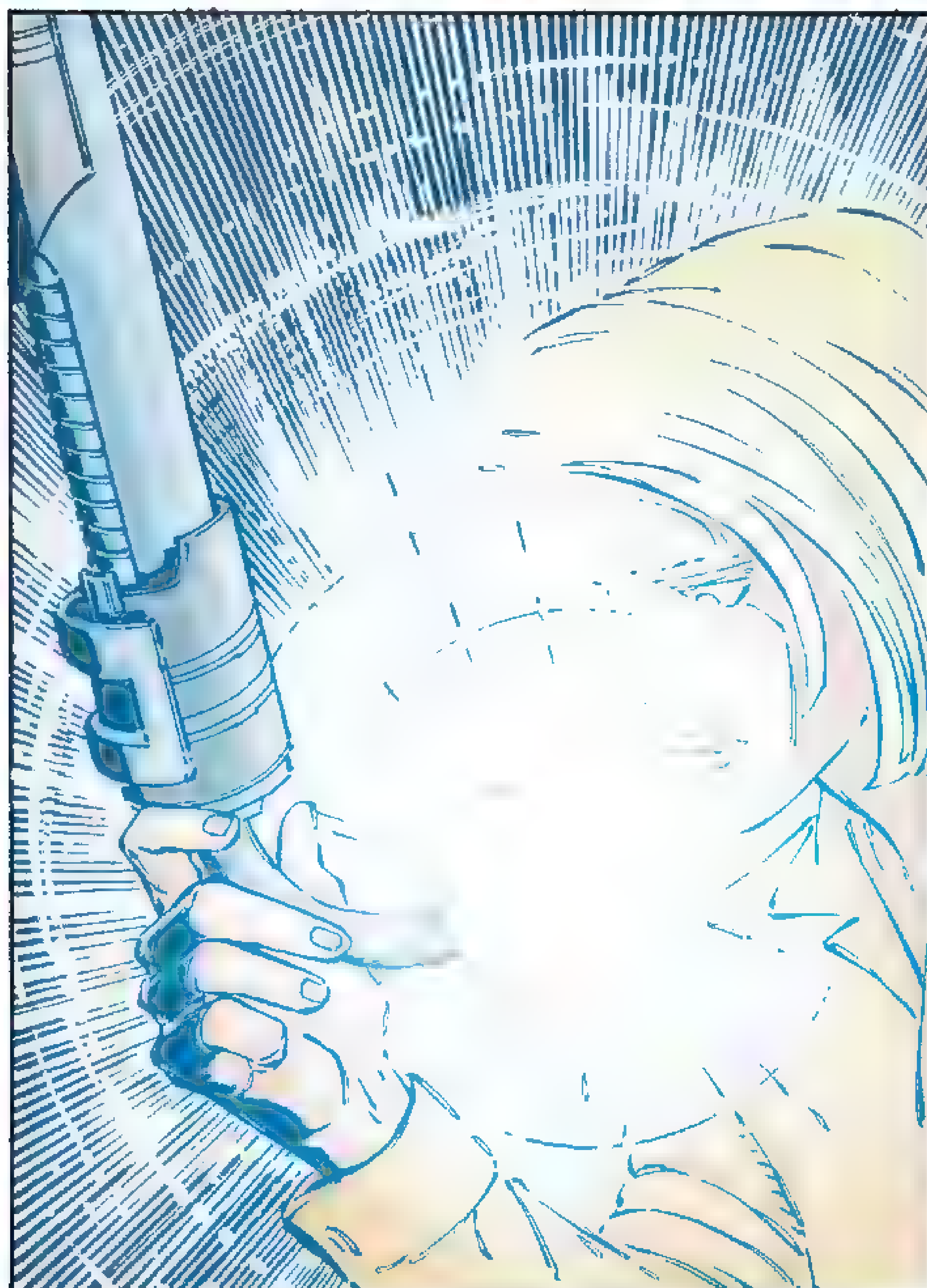

EVERYTHING'S ***FINE*** THAT ISN'T A ***SECRET,*** HON.

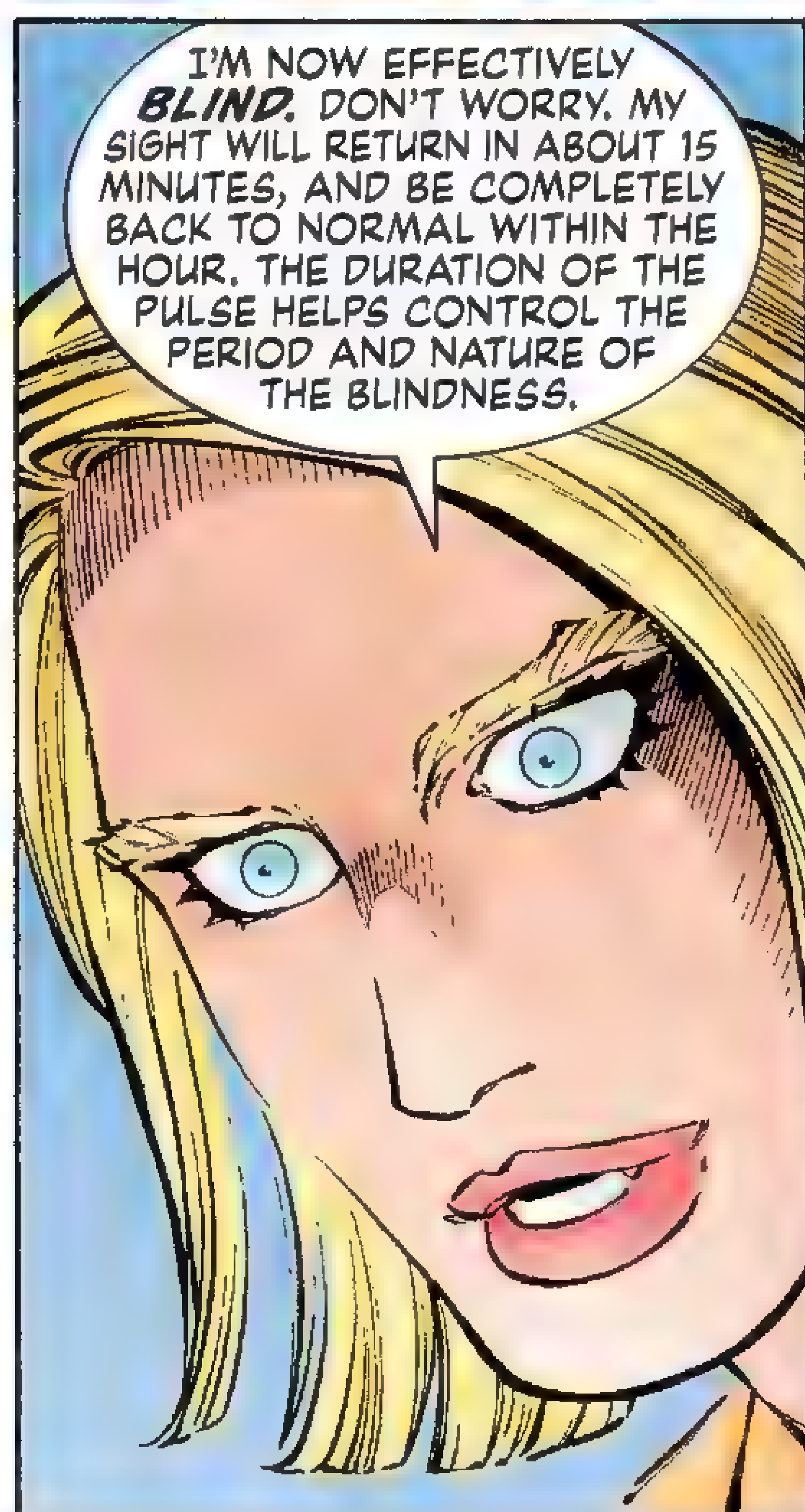

HEY, THENA. I WAS GOING TO ***TELL*** YOU. WE GOT AN INVITATION TO SOME DO AT THE VOROZHEIKAN EMBASSY. BIG PARTY NEXT WEEK. INVITATION ARRIVED WITH A JAR OF CAVIAR.
WOW.
YOU WANT ME TO GET A BABY-SITTER?
OF COURSE.

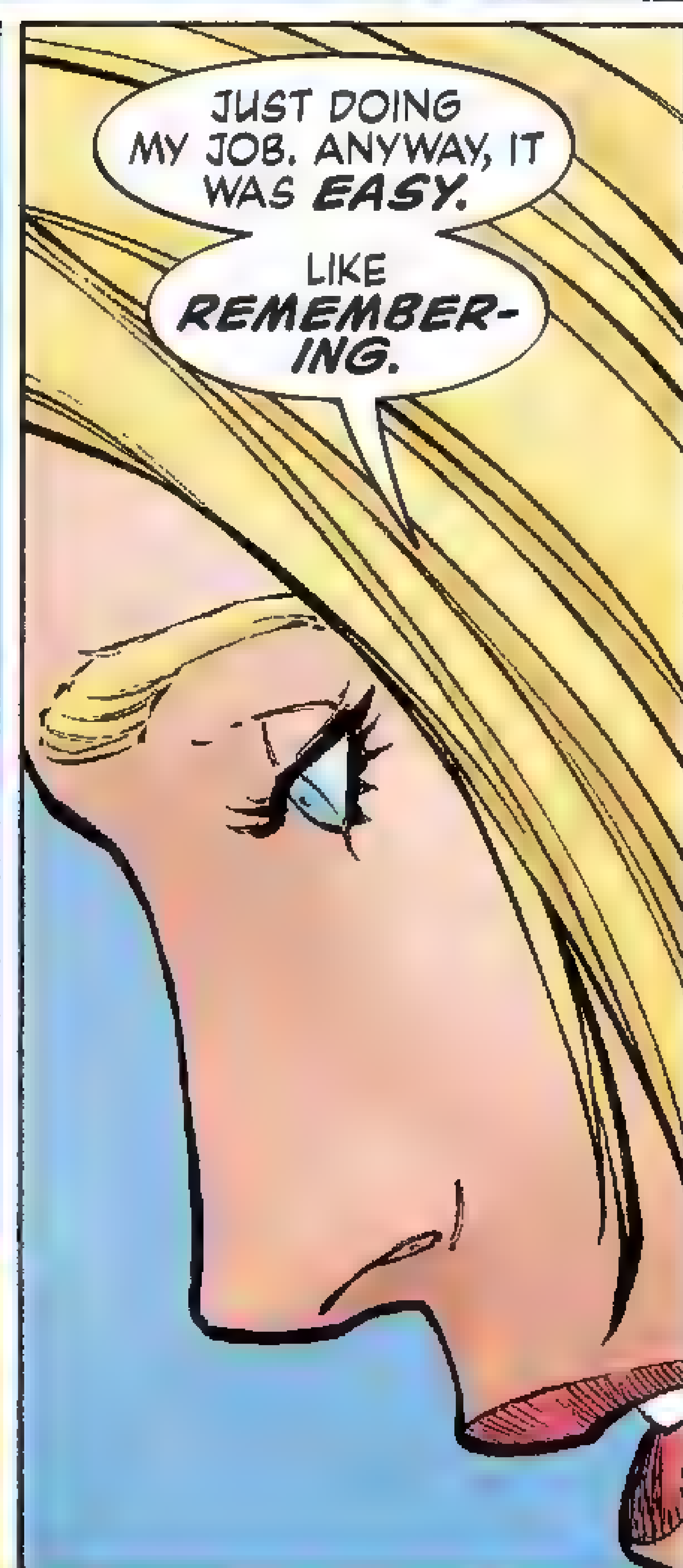

I HAD AN IDEA FOR A WEAPON. WHY DON'T YOU INVENT A ***TRUCK*** THAT TURNS INTO A GIANT FIGHTING ROBOT THAT FLIES? I RAN IT PAST JOEY AND HE LOVES IT.
I'LL PUT IT ON THE ***LIST,*** THOMAS. COMPANY'S HERE. GOTTA GO. ***LOVE*** YOU.


HELLO, MR. STARK. GENERAL. SORRY ABOUT THAT.
NOT A PROBLEM, THENA. YOU KNOW EVERY-ONE HERE?
I DO INDEED. CAN YOU ALL TAKE A PAIR OF ***SAFETY GOGGLES,*** PLEASE?

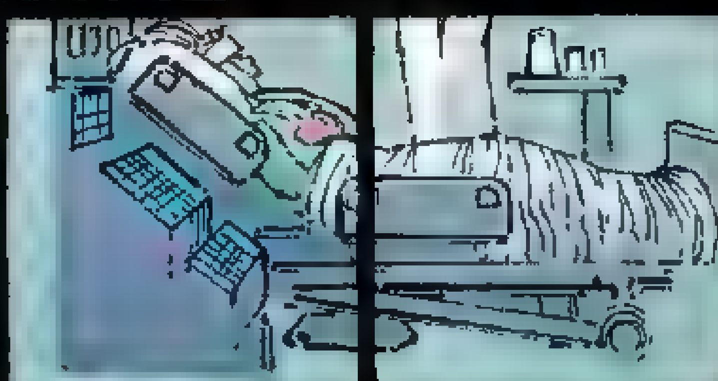

OUR OBJECTIVE WAS TO CREATE A LIGHT-BOMB THAT WOULD CAUSE TEMPORARY BLINDNESS IN THE ENEMY, ALLOWING OUR PEOPLE TO DO WHATEVER THEY NEEDED TO. WE WANTED TO CREATE A PULSE OF LIGHT THAT WOULD SHUT DOWN THE RETINA WITHOUT CAUSING IT ANY KIND OF PERMANENT DAMAGE.


THE LAST THING WE WANT IS A NATION OF BLIND FORMER ENEMY COMBATANTS SUING THE UNITED STATES.
MR. STARK. YOU NEED GOGGLES TOO.
DR. ELIOT? SHOULDN'T YOU?
NOT FOR THIS DEMONSTRATION, NO, GENERAL.




I'M NOW EFFECTIVELY **BLIND.** DON'T WORRY. MY SIGHT WILL RETURN IN ABOUT 15 MINUTES, AND BE COMPLETELY BACK TO NORMAL WITHIN THE HOUR. THE DURATION OF THE PULSE HELPS CONTROL THE PERIOD AND NATURE OF THE BLINDNESS.

THERE IS **NO** DAMAGE TO THE RETINA. THE PULSE SIMPLY TELLS THE BRAIN TO IGNORE ANY SIGNALS COMING FROM THE EYE.
STARK LABORATORIES HAVE BEEN WORKING ON THE PULSE PROJECT FOR FIVE YEARS. THE ARMY LOANS YOU TO US, AND YOU CRACK IT IN TWO MONTHS. YOU'RE A WONDER, THENA.

JUST DOING MY JOB. ANYWAY, IT WAS **EASY.**
LIKE **REMEMBER-ING.**


SO YOU'RE READY TO BELIEVE ME?




I'M READY TO *LISTEN.*
OKAY. THAT'S GOOD ENOUGH, I GUESS.

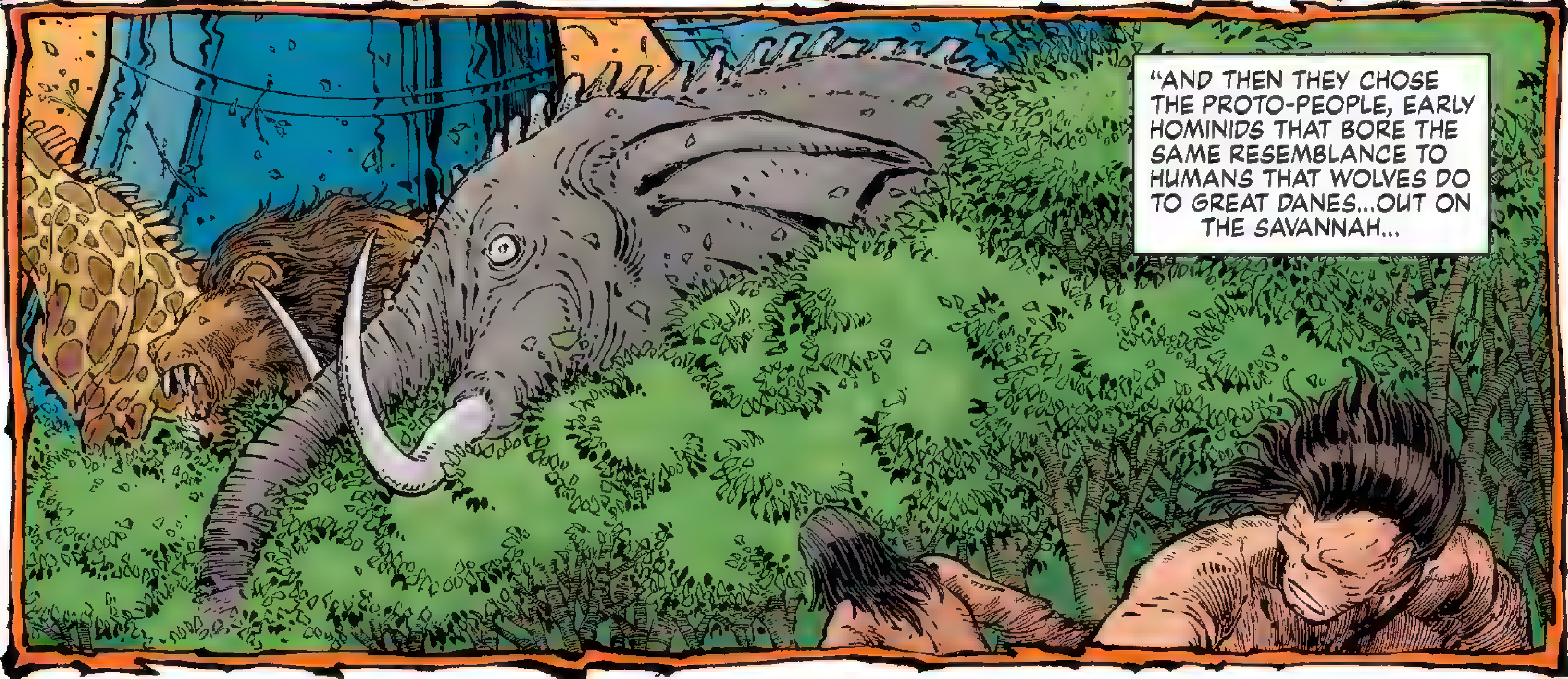

I DON'T KNOW WHAT THE *CELESTIALS* ARE. IF I EVER KNEW, I DON'T *REMEMBER.* THERE ARE...A *FEW* THINGS I DON'T REMEMBER...
"I DON'T KNOW IF THEY CAME TO EARTH *ONCE* OR A *HUNDRED TIMES* BEFORE THE MODERN AGE."
"THE MODERN AGE?"

"THE LAST MILLION YEARS. ZURAS BELIEVED THEY HAD. HE TOLD ME ONCE THAT HE BELIEVED THEY HAD SEEDED THE WHOLE PLANET WITH LIFE.

"MAYBE THERE WERE ONCE ***DINOSAUR*** CIVILIZATIONS. YOU EVER WONDER WHERE THEY ***REALLY*** WENT, 65 MILLION YEARS AGO?

"I WONDER IF IT'S SOME COSMIC ***GAME*** THE CELESTIALS PLAY OVER AND OVER. DEVIANTS, ETERNALS, HUMANS...

"*THIS* IS WHAT HAPPENED, THE WAY I REMEMBER IT...THEY CAME HERE OVER HALF-A-MILLION YEARS AGO, MAYBE A MILLION. THEY WERE BIGGER THAN YOU CAN ***IMAGINE.*** BIGGER THAN ***GIANTS.***




"HUMANS WERE SIMPLER, THEN. SMALLER. *STUPIDER.* BUT THE CELESTIALS SAW THE POTENTIAL, KNEW WHAT ONE DAY THEY COULD GROW INTO.

"THE CELESTIALS BUILT MACHINES. THEY USE ***ROCK*** FOR THEIR MACHINES, YOU KNOW THAT?

"MY FRIEND AJAK, HE COULD TALK TO THE GODS DIRECTLY, *MIND-TO-MIND.* IT WAS HIS SKILL, AS YOURS IS SPEED.

"HE SPENT ***CENTURIES*** TRYING TO FIGURE OUT HOW THE MACHINES WORK.

"AJAK SAID THEY WERE LIKE NANO-CIRCUITS, ONLY THE OTHER WAY AROUND. MACRO-CIRCUITS, MAYBE? BIG ROCKS THAT DO MAGIC.


"REAL...
"...MAGIC...

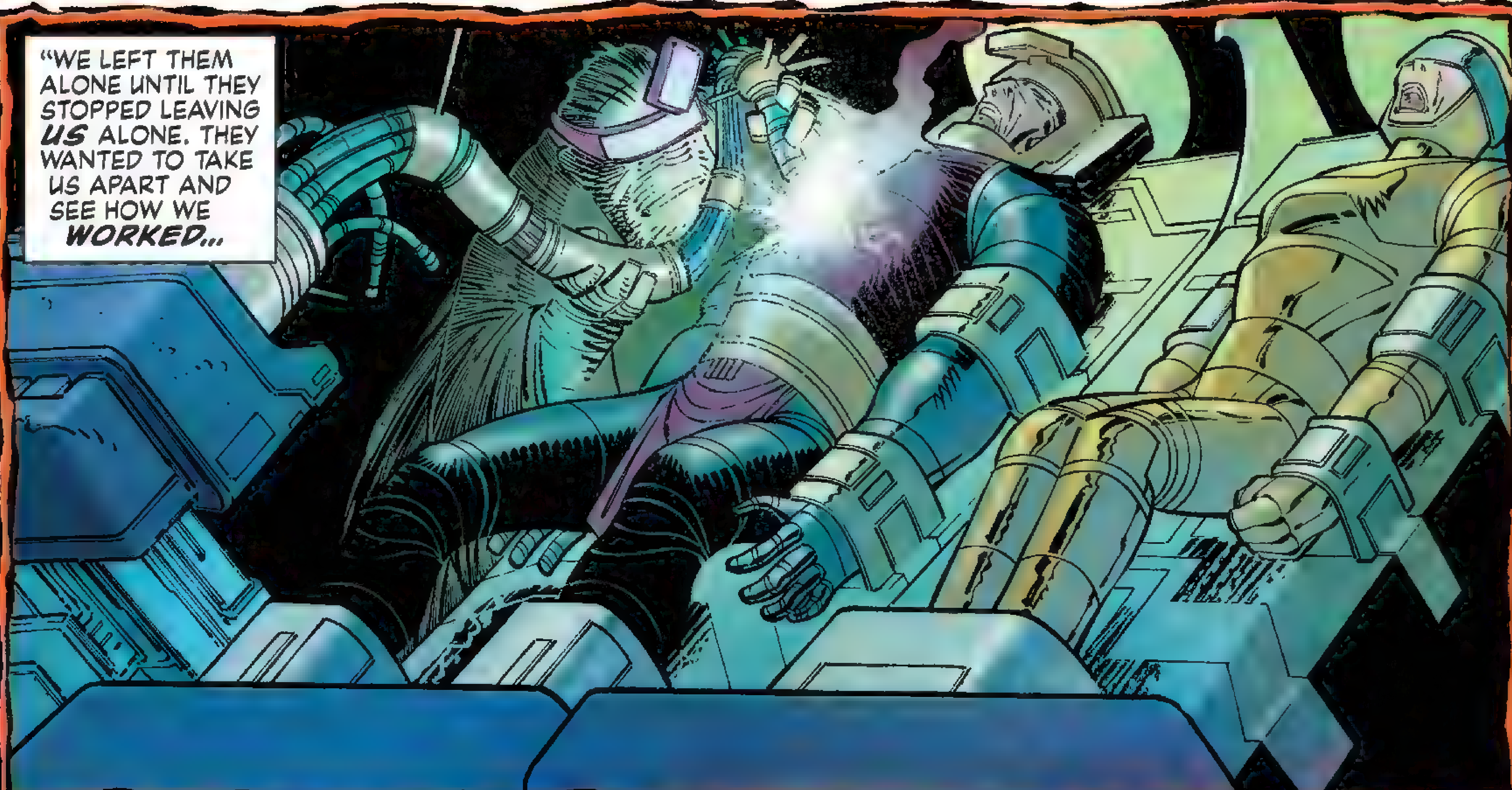
"THEY MADE THE ETERNALS.
"ME, I WAS MADE BY THE CELESTIALS. IT'S LIKE THE ARGUMENTS ABOUT INTELLIGENT DESIGN. I *KNOW* MY DESIGNERS WERE INTELLIGENT. I JUST DON'T KNOW WHAT THEY *WANTED* ME FOR.
"THEY MADE ABOUT A HUNDRED OF US. AND THEN THEY MADE THE DEVIANTS.

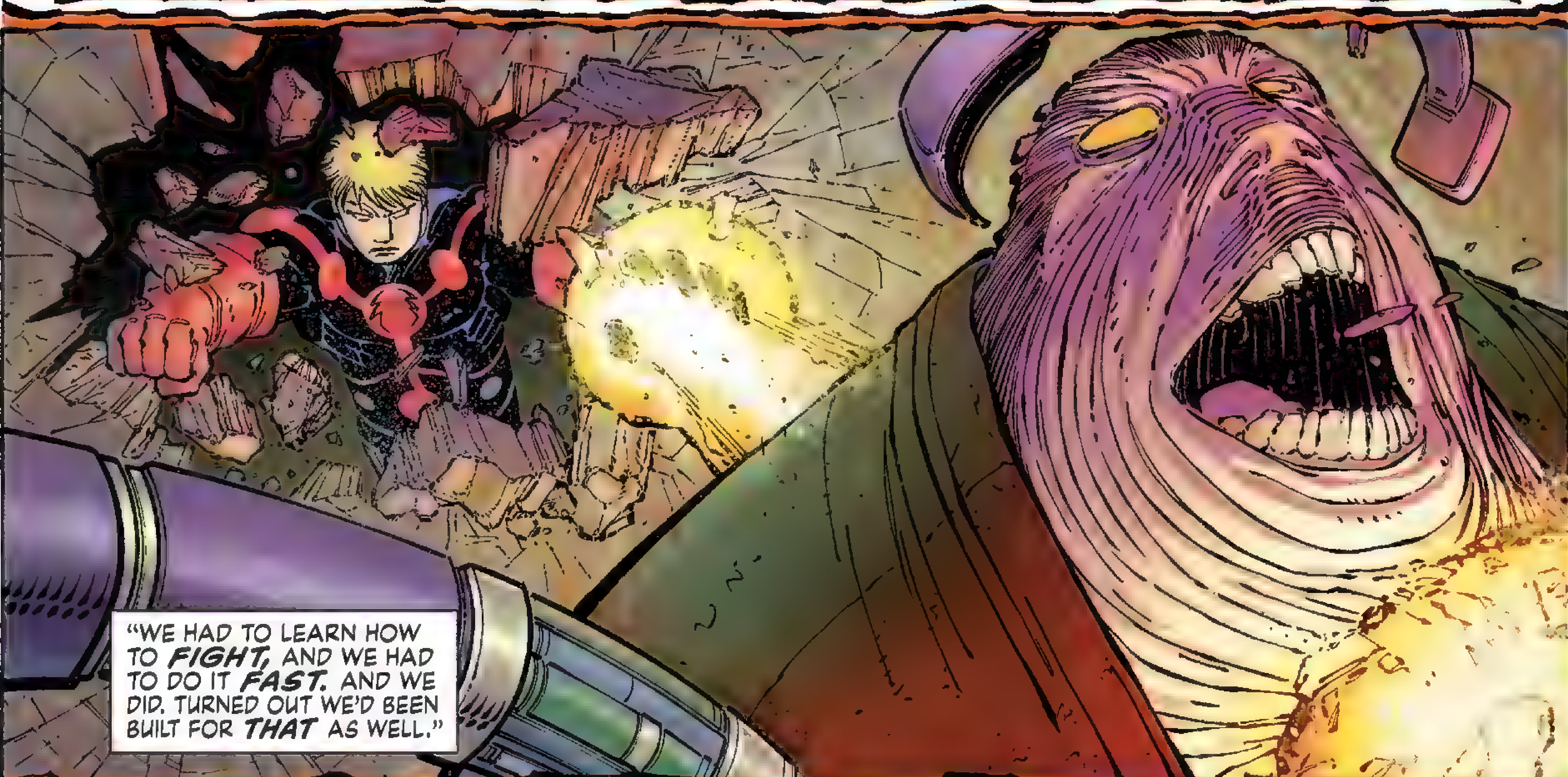
"I THINK THE DEVIANTS DID THIS TO ***ME,*** MARK. TO ***US...***

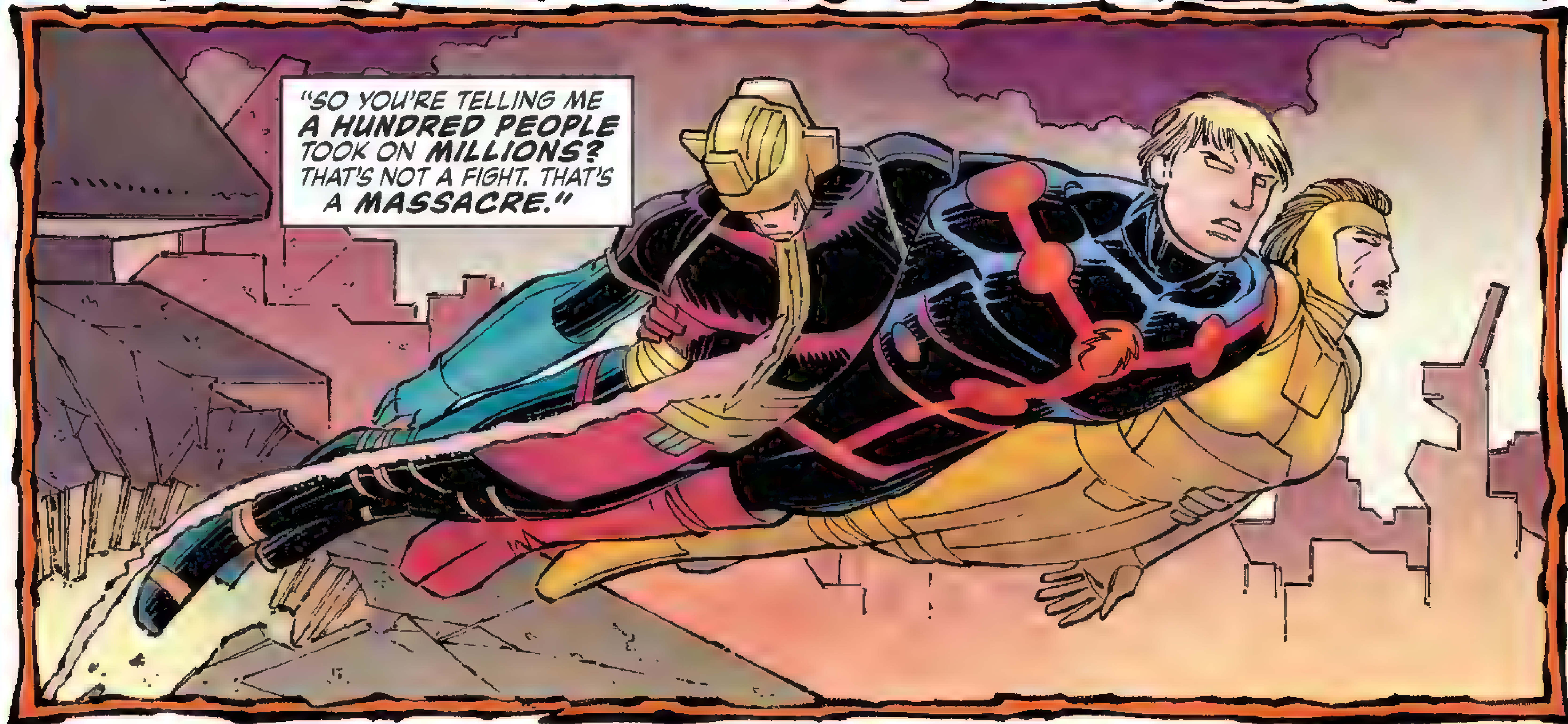
"IMAGINE A RACE OF PEOPLE, NONE OF WHOM WAS EVEN OF THE SAME SPECIES. EACH WITH A DIFFERENT LOOK, ATTRIBUTE, SHAPE. ***EVERY*** MEMBER OF THE DEVIANT RACE WAS A FRESH ROLL OF THE GENETIC DICE.

"THEY KIND OF GOT OUT OF HAND. BRED LIKE RABBITS, AND WERE SMARTER THAN WHIPS. PRETTY SOON THEY RULED THE WORLD.

"***MILLIONS*** OF THEM, ALL SO DIFFERENT...


"WE LEFT THEM ALONE UNTIL THEY STOPPED LEAVING US ALONE. THEY WANTED TO TAKE US APART AND SEE HOW WE WORKED...


"WE HAD TO LEARN HOW TO FIGHT, AND WE HAD TO DO IT FAST. AND WE DID. TURNED OUT WE'D BEEN BUILT FOR THAT AS WELL."


"SO YOU'RE TELLING ME A HUNDRED PEOPLE TOOK ON MILLIONS? THAT'S NOT A FIGHT. THAT'S A MASSACRE."

"IT BECOMES A FIGHT WHEN THE HUNDRED CAN'T BE KILLED.

"AND WHEN WE HAVE TACTICIANS LIKE ZURAS, OUR LEADER, AND THENA, HIS DAUGHTER...

"...EVEN DRUIG OF NIGHTMARES, MY COUSIN. HE WAS ALWAYS A NASTY PIECE OF WORK, BUT HE WAS LETHAL...

"AND YOU, MAKKARI.

"BUT YOU'RE RIGHT. IT WAS ***NOT*** A WAR THAT WE COULD ***WIN***.

"STILL, WE KNEW HOW TO ***CALL*** THEM. THEY LEFT US THAT KNOWLEDGE. AND WHEN THE TIME CAME, WE ***CALLED.***

"AND THEY CAME FROM SPACE. THE ***SECOND HORDE.***

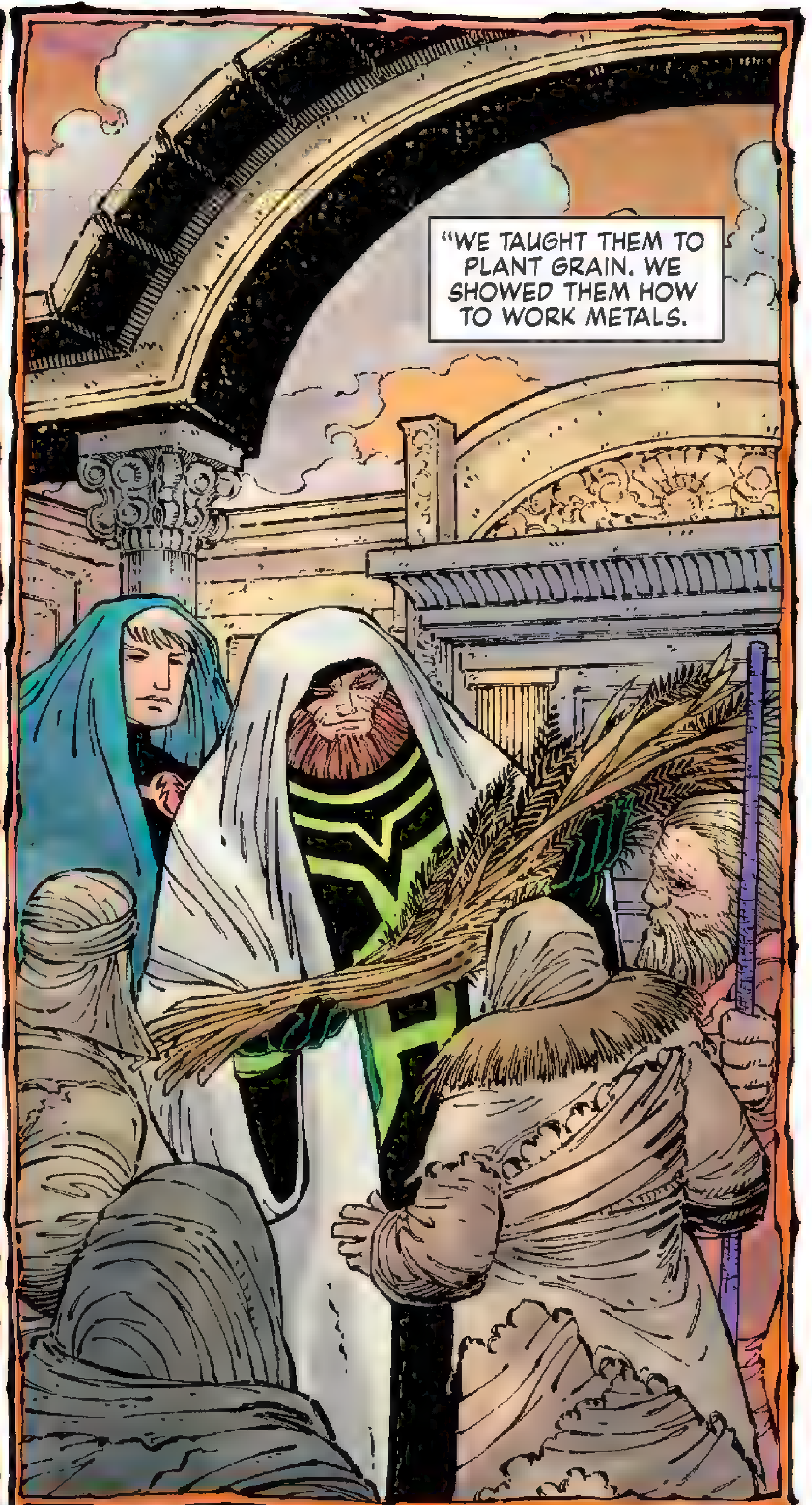
"THE DEVIANTS FOUGHT BACK, BUT IT WAS LIKE A CLOUD OF GNATS GOING UP AGAINST AN ARMORED CAR.

"WITHIN DAYS THE DEVIANTS WERE ***DEFEATED.***

"THEIR ***LANDS*** WERE DESTROYED, AND LOST BENEATH THE PACIFIC OCEAN.

"THEY WERE REDUCED TO A FEW THOUSAND SURVIVORS, AND HAVE ***NEVER*** AGAIN REGAINED THEIR NUMBERS.



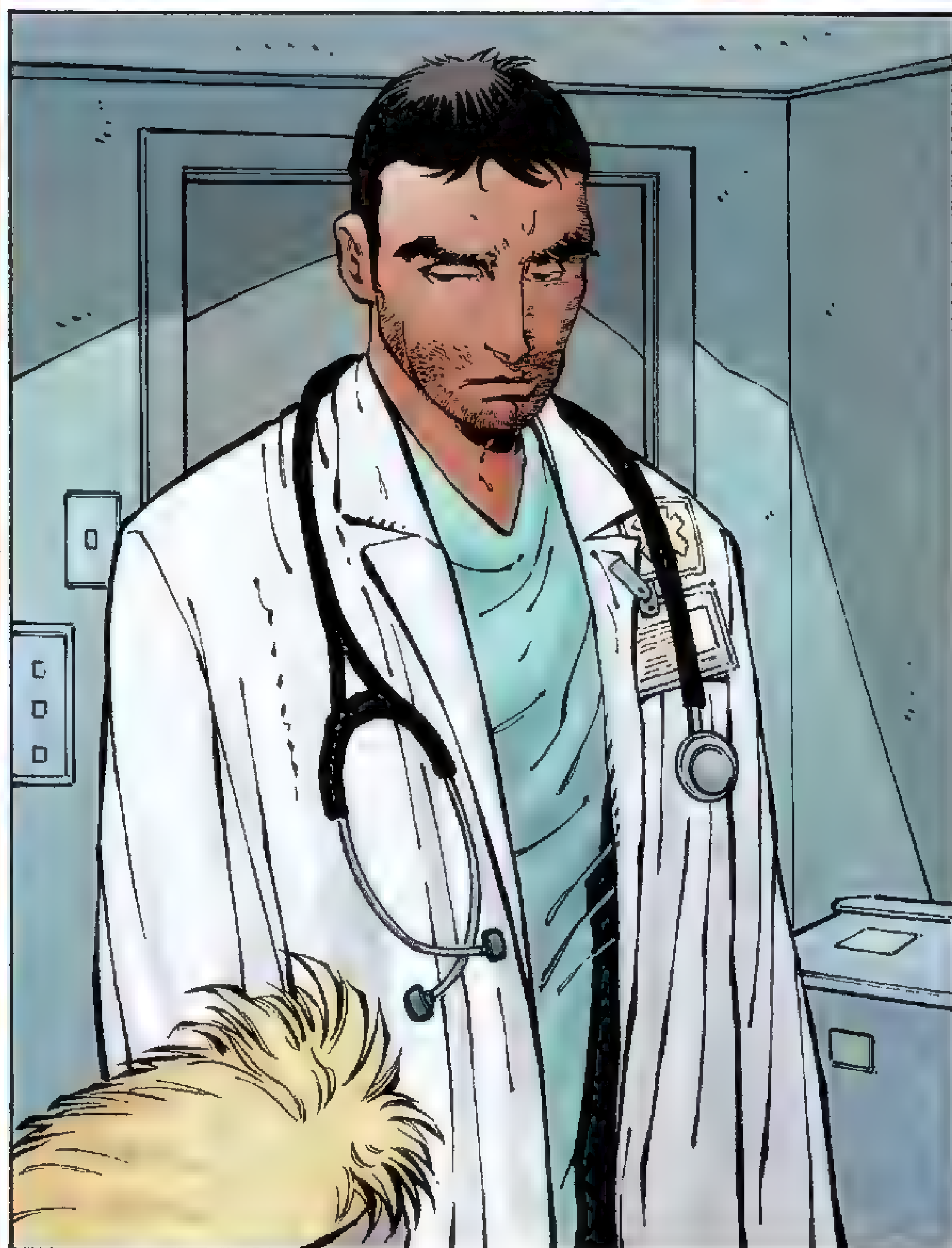


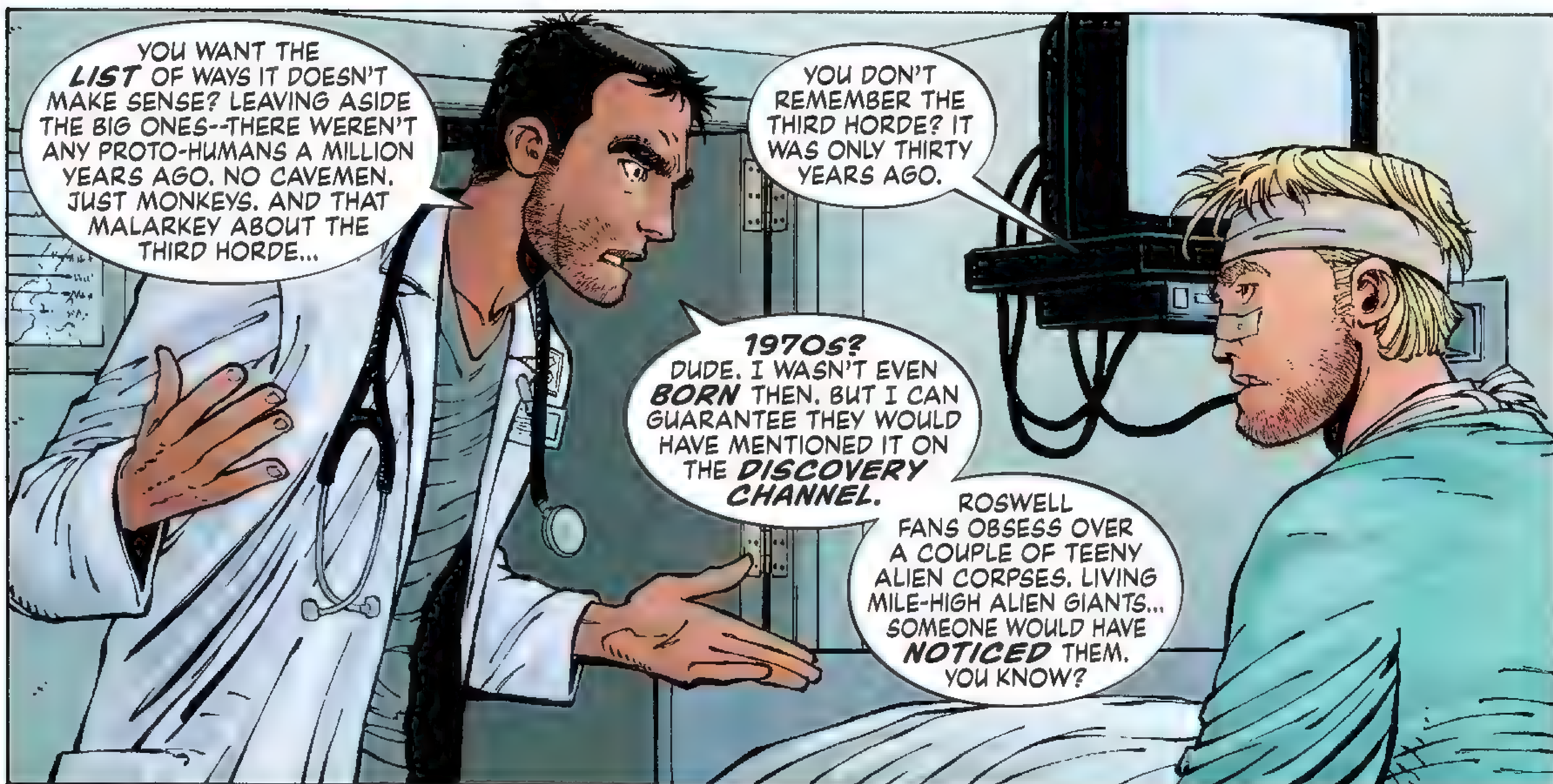
"WE ALL HAD DIFFERENT TALENTS AND SKILLS, AND WE USED THEM, QUIETLY, SELECTIVELY, TO HELP TO BUILD THE HUMAN RACE. WHEN YOU GAVE THEM WRITING, MAKKARI, THEY CALLED YOU OSIRIS...

"AND THEN, THIRTY YEARS AGO, THE CELESTIALS CAME BACK, TO JUDGE HUMANITY AS ONCE THEY HAD JUDGED THE DEVIANTS. THE THIRD HORDE...

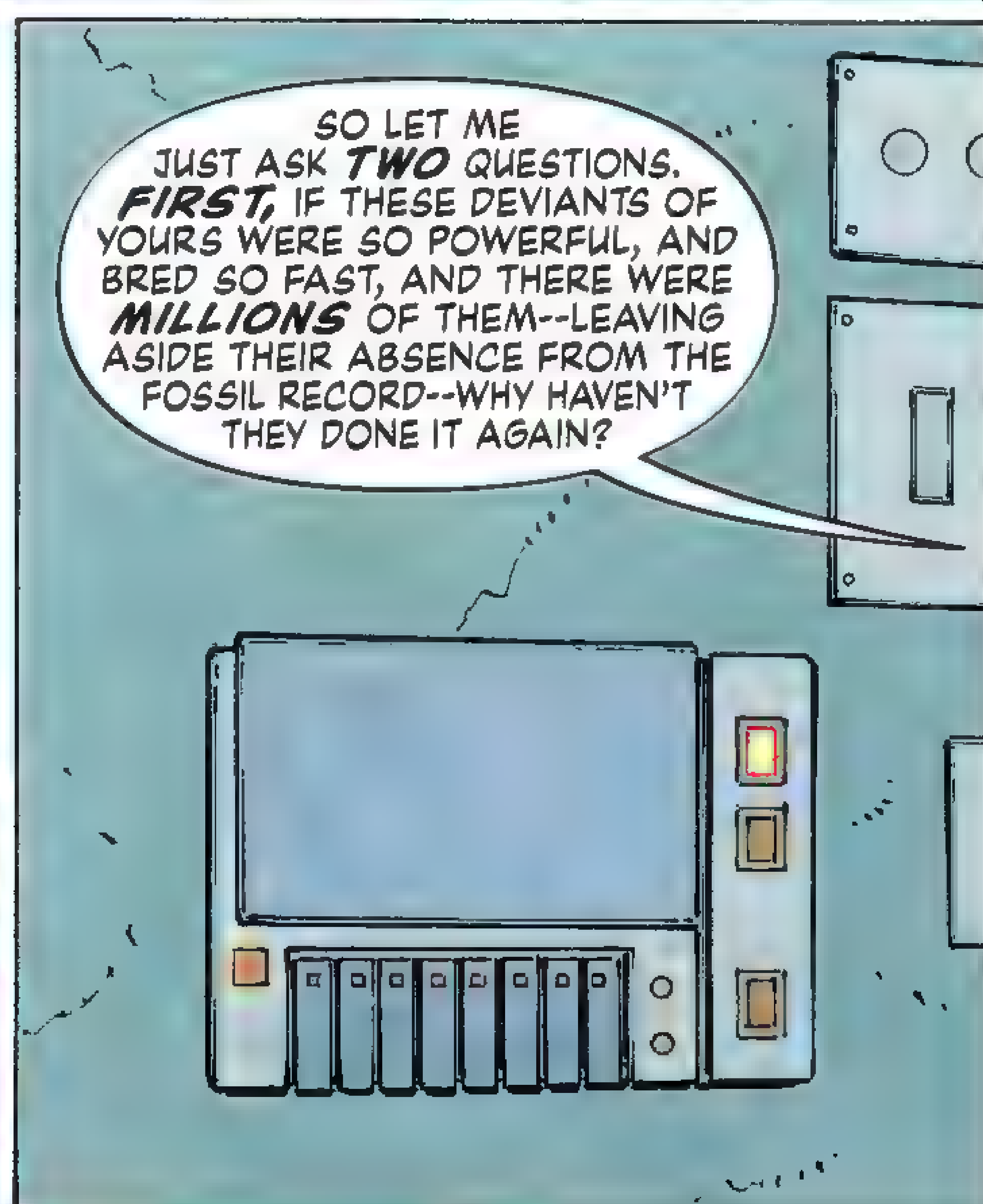
"I DON'T REALLY REMEMBER ALL OF IT AFTER THAT. THERE'S STUFF THAT'S KINDA ***CLOUDY*** IN MY MIND..."

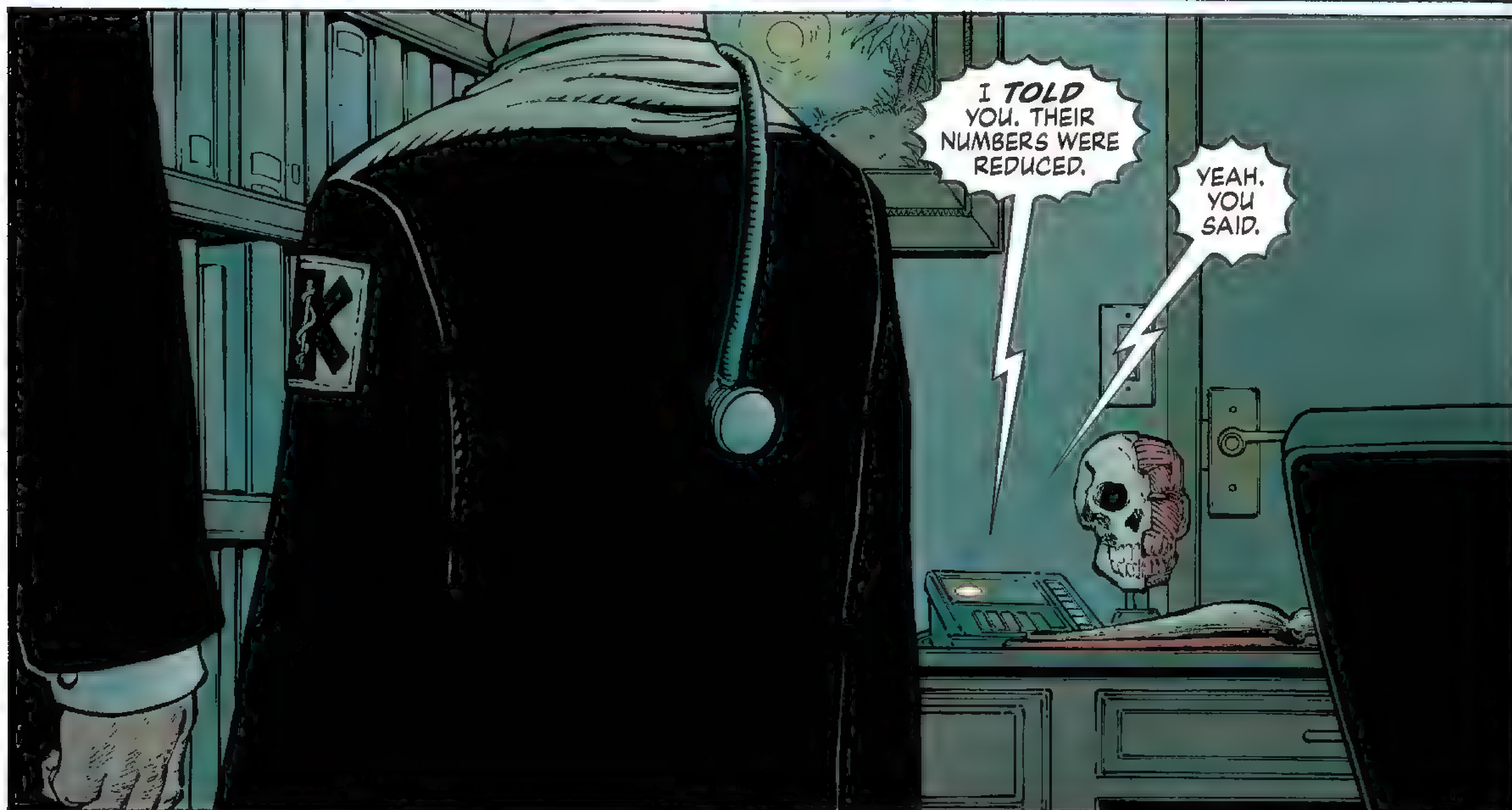


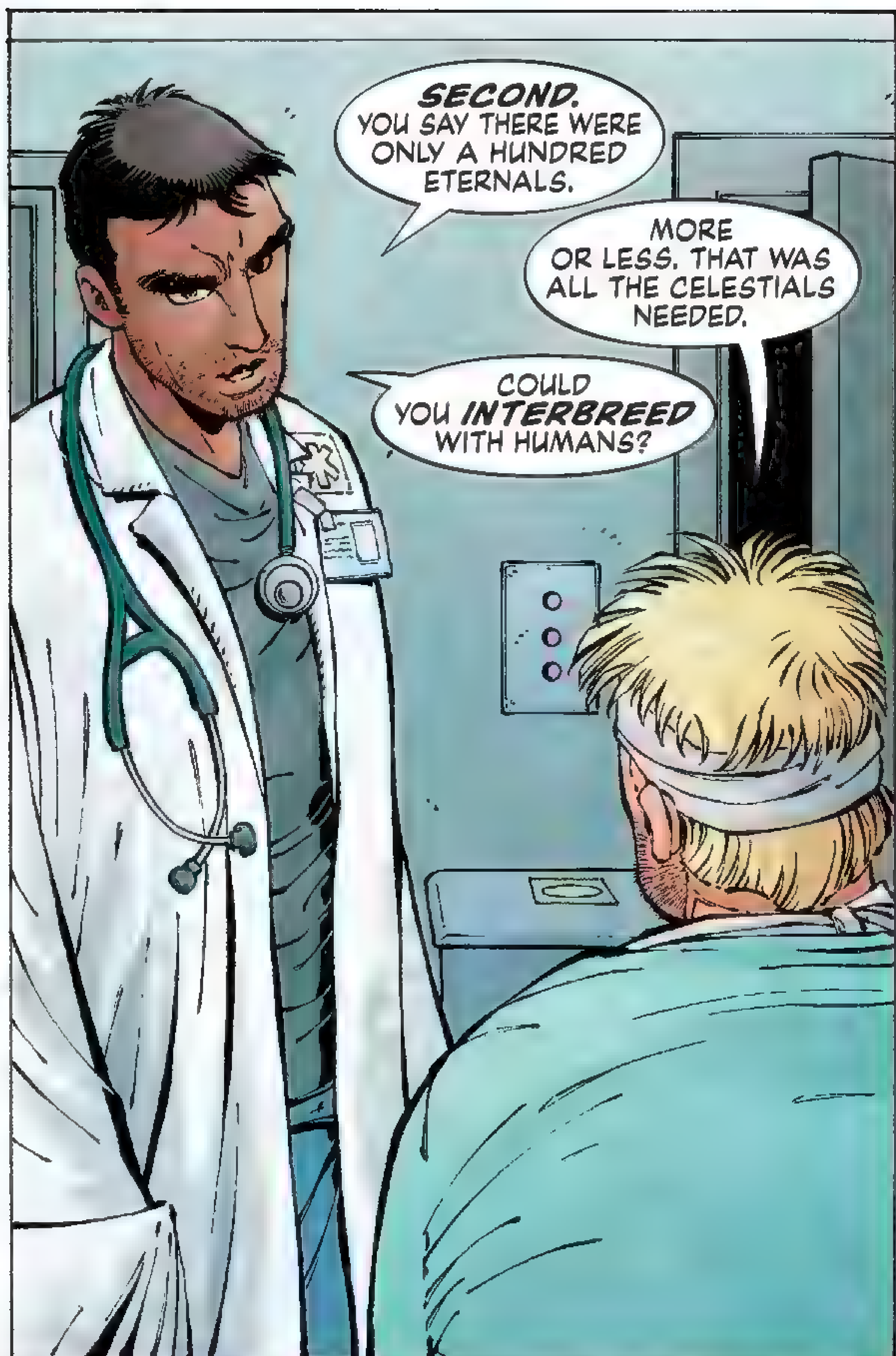



YOU WANT THE LIST OF WAYS IT DOESN'T MAKE SENSE? LEAVING ASIDE THE BIG ONES--THERE WEREN'T ANY PROTO-HUMANS A MILLION YEARS AGO. NO CAVEMEN. JUST MONKEYS. AND THAT MALARKEY ABOUT THE THIRD HORDE...
YOU DON'T REMEMBER THE THIRD HORDE? IT WAS ONLY THIRTY YEARS AGO.
1970s? DUDE. I WASN'T EVEN BORN THEN. BUT I CAN GUARANTEE THEY WOULD HAVE MENTIONED IT ON THE DISCOVERY CHANNEL.
ROSWELL FANS OBSESS OVER A COUPLE OF TEENY ALIEN CORPSES. LIVING MILE-HIGH ALIEN GIANTS... SOMEONE WOULD HAVE NOTICED THEM. YOU KNOW?


THAT STUFF'S JUST SO CRAZY. I'M NOT EVEN GOING TO GO THERE.


SO LET ME JUST ASK TWO QUESTIONS. FIRST, IF THESE DEVIANTS OF YOURS WERE SO POWERFUL, AND BRED SO FAST, AND THERE WERE MILLIONS OF THEM--LEAVING ASIDE THEIR ABSENCE FROM THE FOSSIL RECORD--WHY HAVEN'T THEY DONE IT AGAIN?

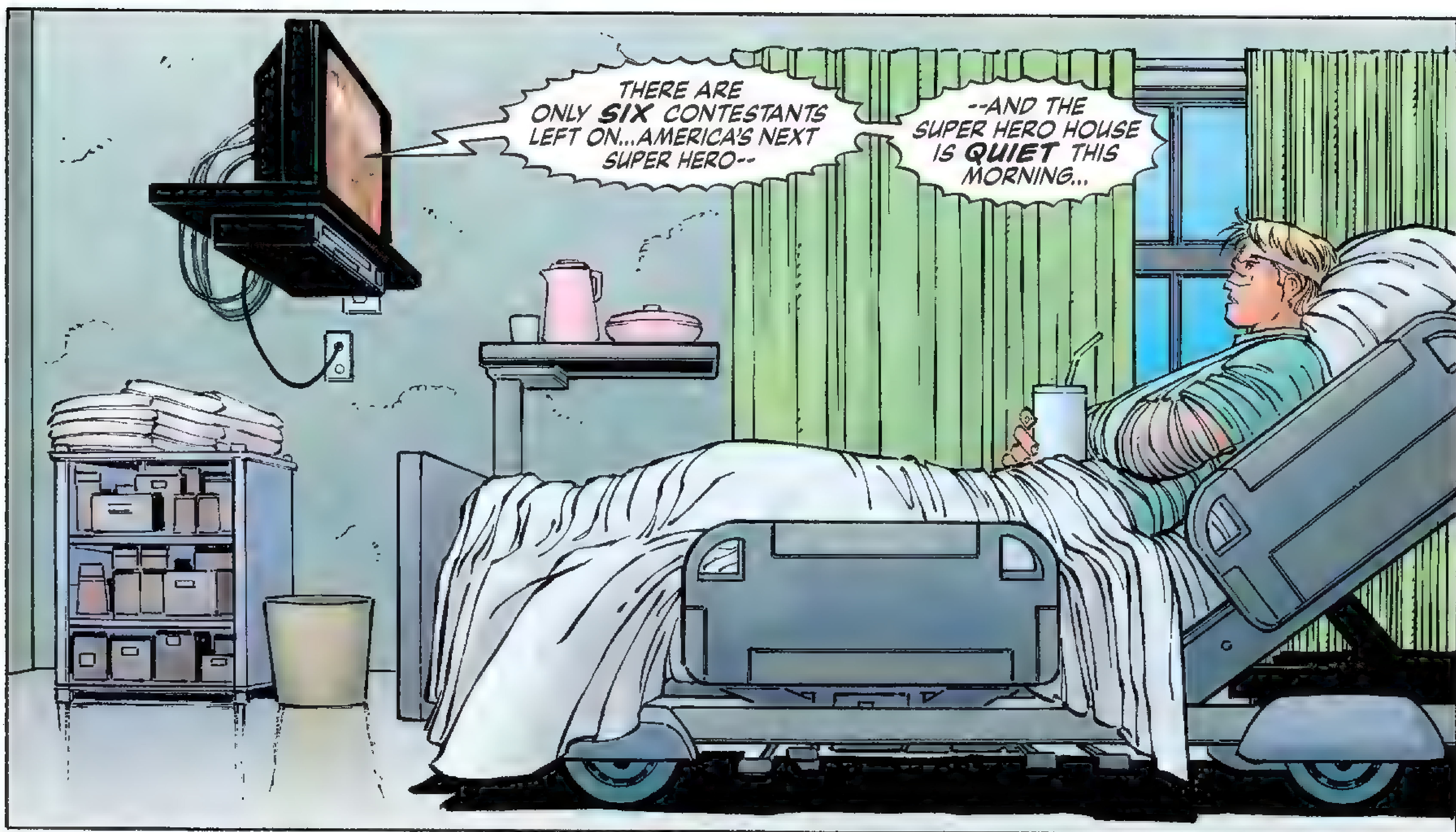

I TOLD YOU. THEIR NUMBERS WERE REDUCED.
YEAH. YOU SAID.

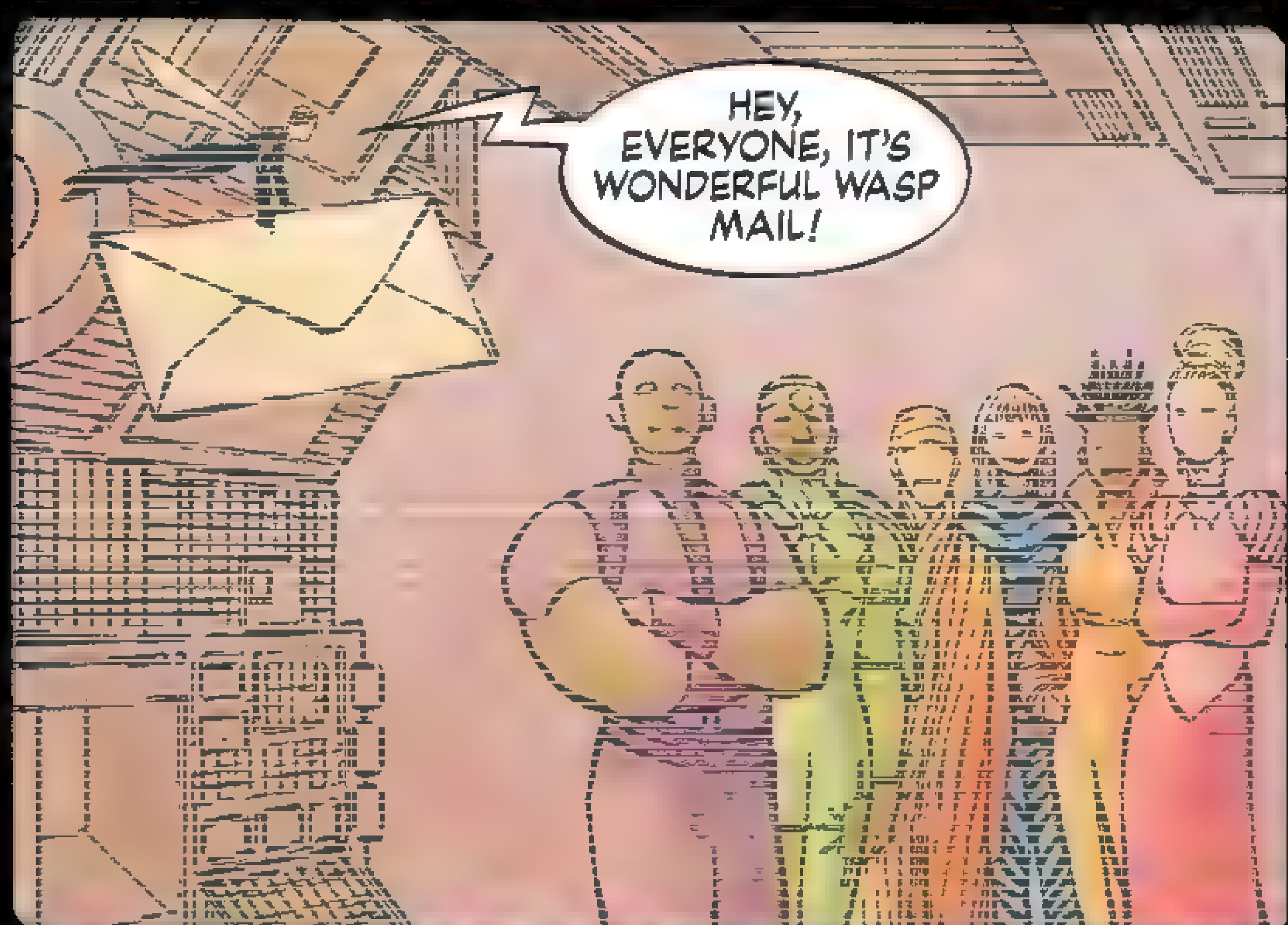

SECOND. YOU SAY THERE WERE ONLY A HUNDRED ETERNALS.
MORE OR LESS. THAT WAS ALL THE CELESTIALS NEEDED.
COULD YOU INTERBREED WITH HUMANS?

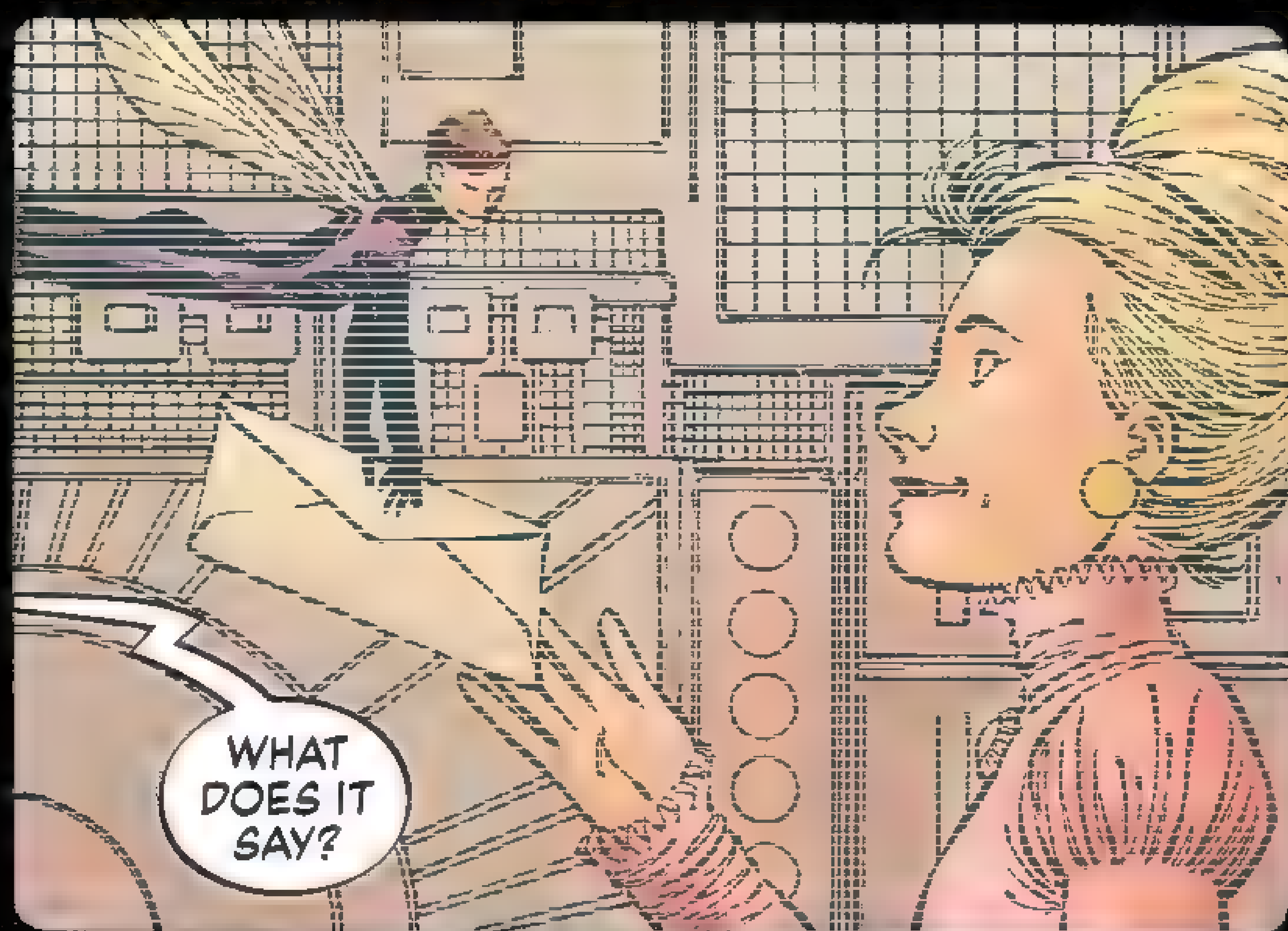

AND YOU SAID YOU COULD MATE WITH EACH OTHER. YOU SAID YOU HAD A COUSIN, THAT ZURAS HAD A DAUGHTER...
I GUESS SO...IT'S KIND OF FOGGY...
YES... I...THAT'S WHAT I REMEMBER...
THEN TELL ME, WHY DIDN'T YOUR PEOPLE POPULATE THE EARTH? YOU SAY YOU DON'T DIE, YOU DON'T GET SICK. IN THE GENETIC LOTTERY, YOU'RE THE ONES GOING HOME WITH THE NEW CAR AND THE HUNDRED MILLION BUCKS.

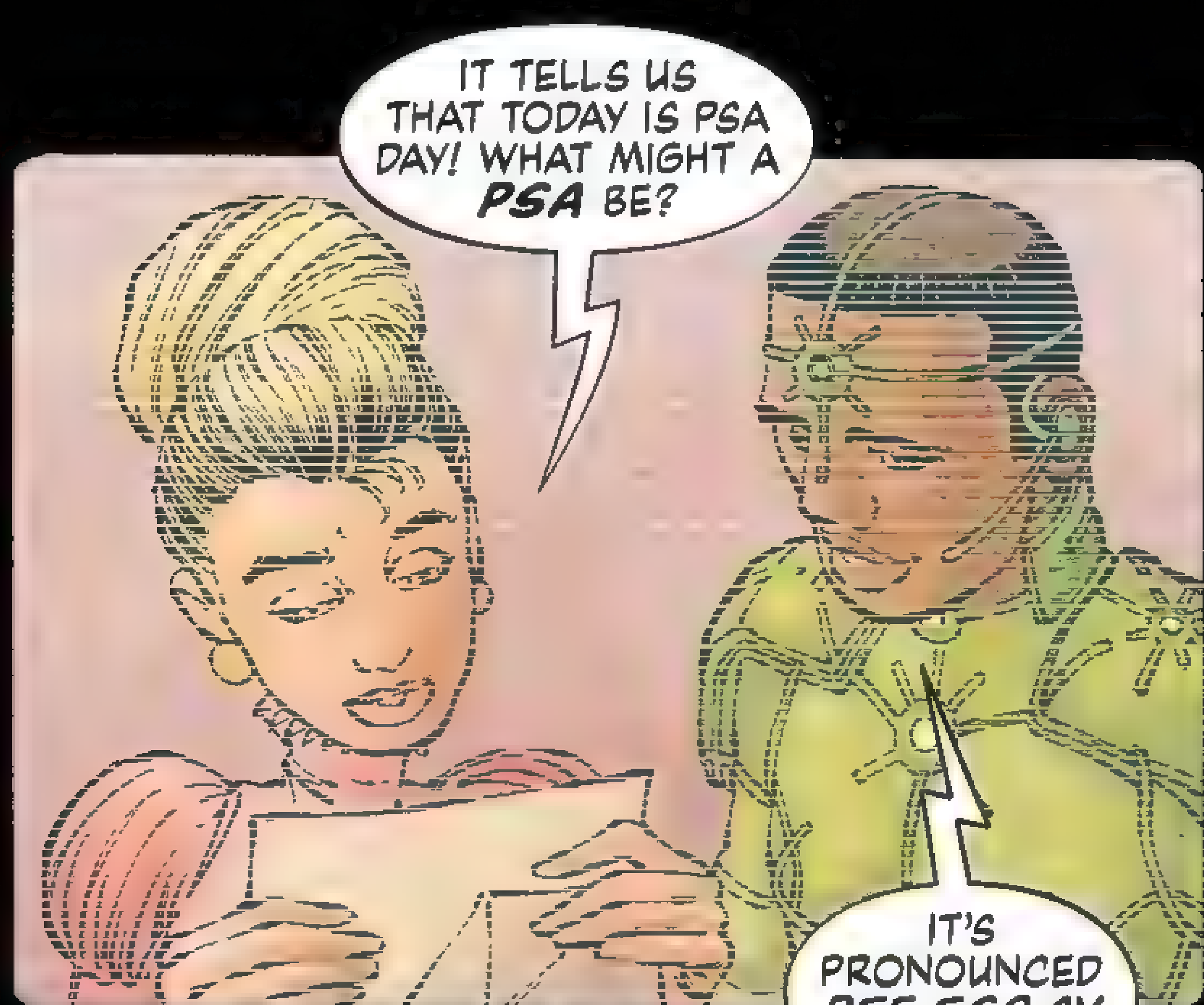

IF YOUR STORY WAS TRUE, WE'D ALL BE ETERNALS NOW.
YOU KNOW, I'M PRACTICALLY HEALED UNDER HERE.
I SURVIVED A BOMB. I FELL TO MY DEATH AND LIVED. IF MY STORY ISN'T TRUE, WHY AREN'T I DEAD?

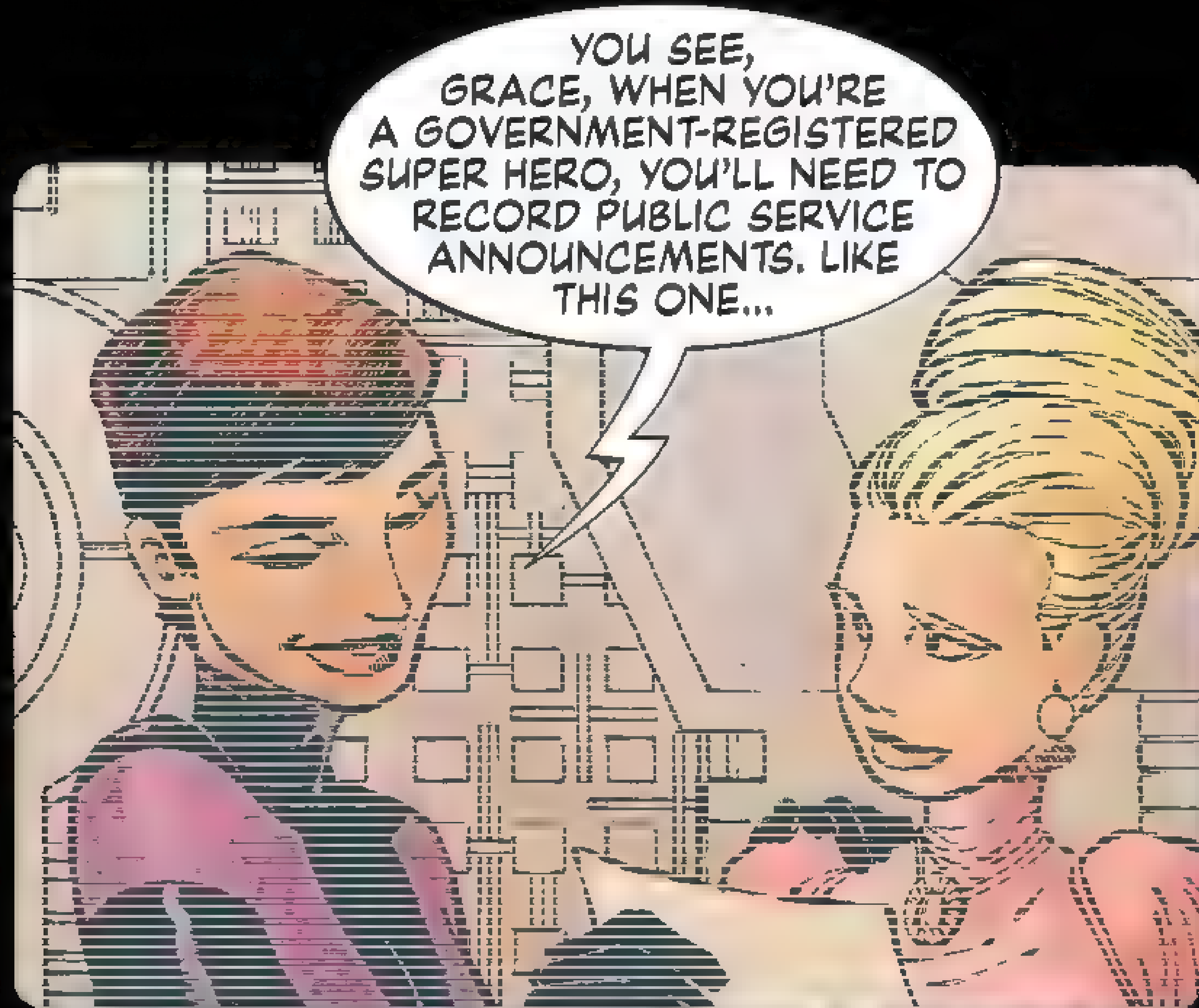

IT'S A WEIRD WORLD OUT THERE, DUDE.
BUT Y'KNOW, IF SPIDER-MAN TOLD ME THAT HE GOT HIS SPIDER-POWERS FROM READING CHARIOTS OF THE GODS, GUESS I'D FIGURE HE WAS FULL OF IT TOO.


THERE ARE ONLY SIX CONTESTANTS LEFT ON...AMERICA'S NEXT SUPER HERO--
--AND THE SUPER HERO HOUSE IS QUIET THIS MORNING...


HEY, EVERYONE, IT'S WONDERFUL WASP MAIL!


WHAT DOES IT SAY?


IT TELLS US THAT TODAY IS PSA DAY! WHAT MIGHT A PSA BE?
IT'S PRONOUNCED PEE ESS AY, GRACE.


YOU SEE, GRACE, WHEN YOU'RE A GOVERNMENT-REGISTERED SUPER HERO, YOU'LL NEED TO RECORD PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS. LIKE THIS ONE...





WHOO. I CAN PICK UP A HUMVEE WITH MY LEFT HAND, SO YOU'D THINK I WOULDN'T BE SCARED OF ANYTHING, BUT SPRITE IS ***AWESOME!***

WHEN MY LITTLE SISTER FINDS OUT I MET SPRITE, SHE IS GOING TO, LIKE, JUST ***FREAK.*** HE'S SO FUNNY.

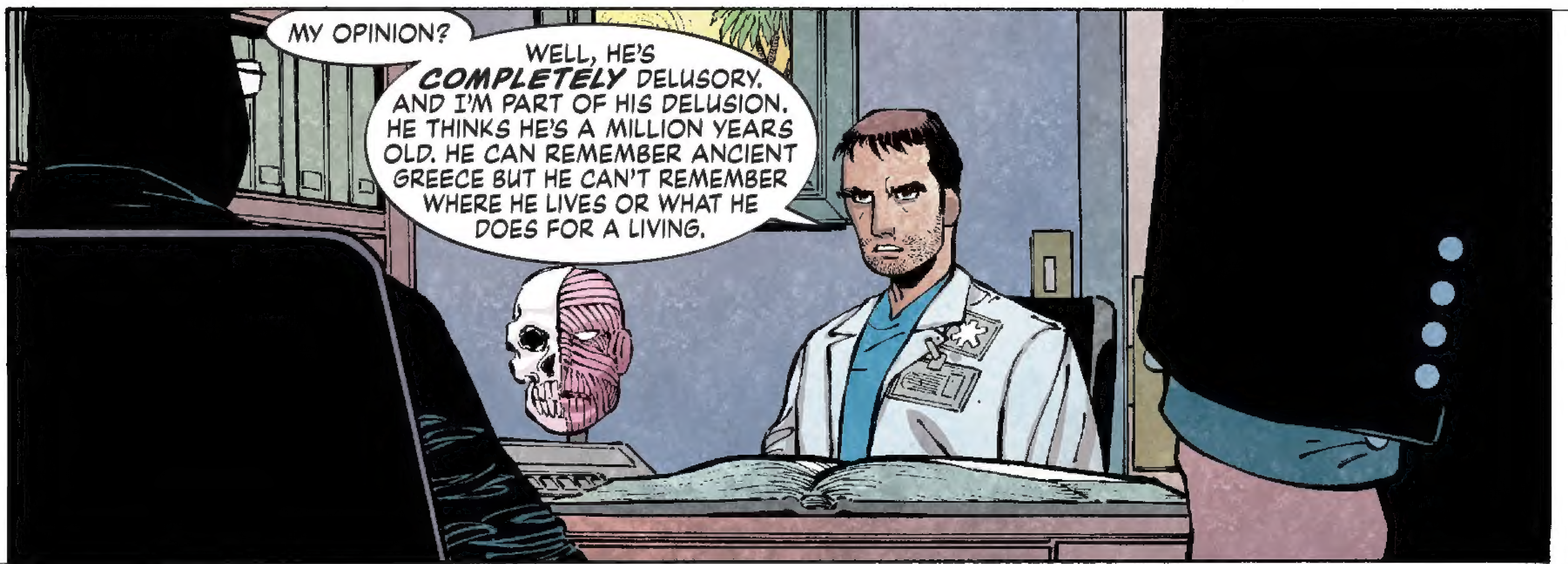
OKAY. EVEN IF I DON'T GET TO BE AMERICA'S NEXT SUPER HERO, I MET SPRITE.

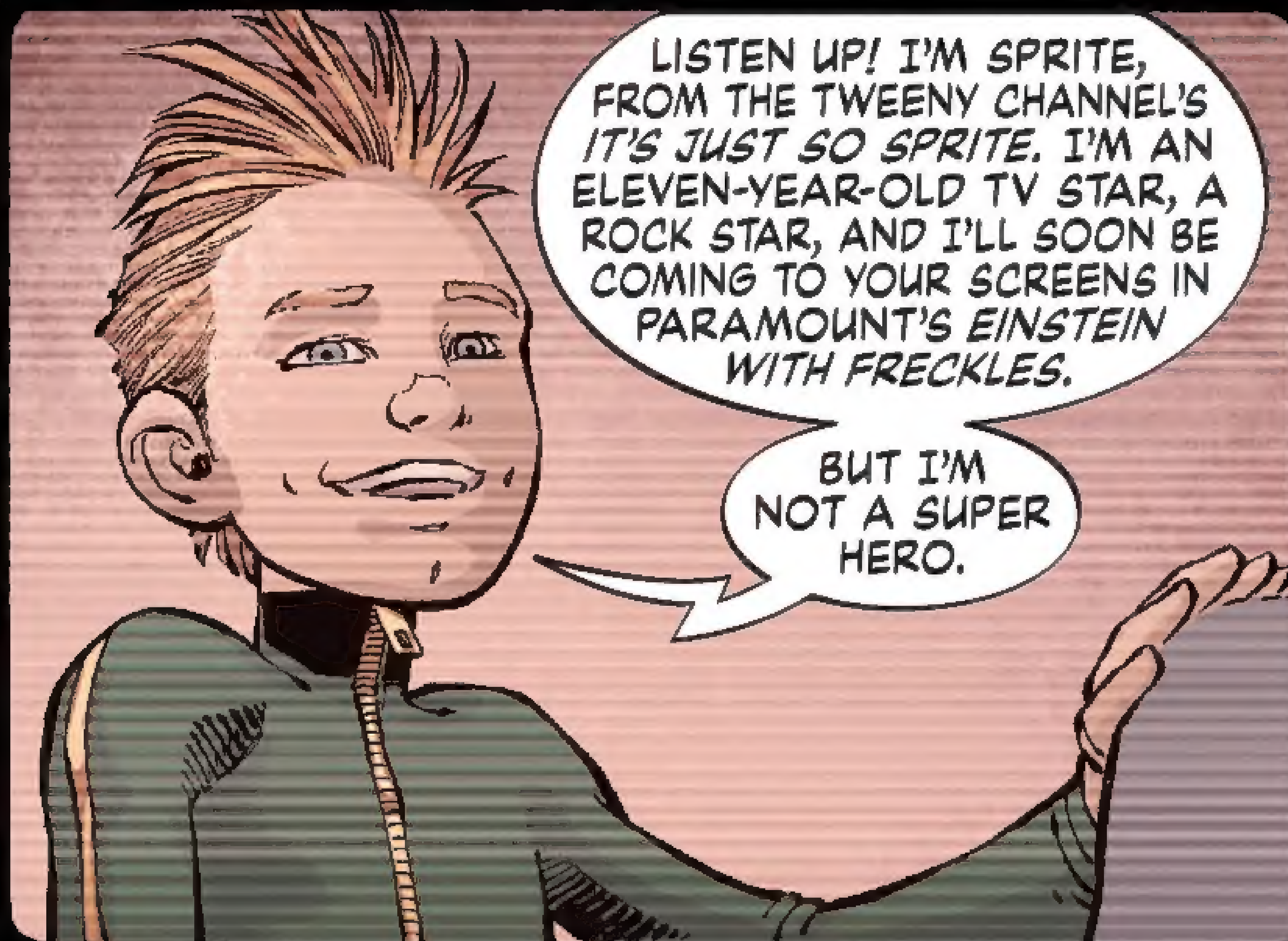
I AM NOW OFFICIALLY THE ***COOLEST*** KID IN MY SCHOOL!

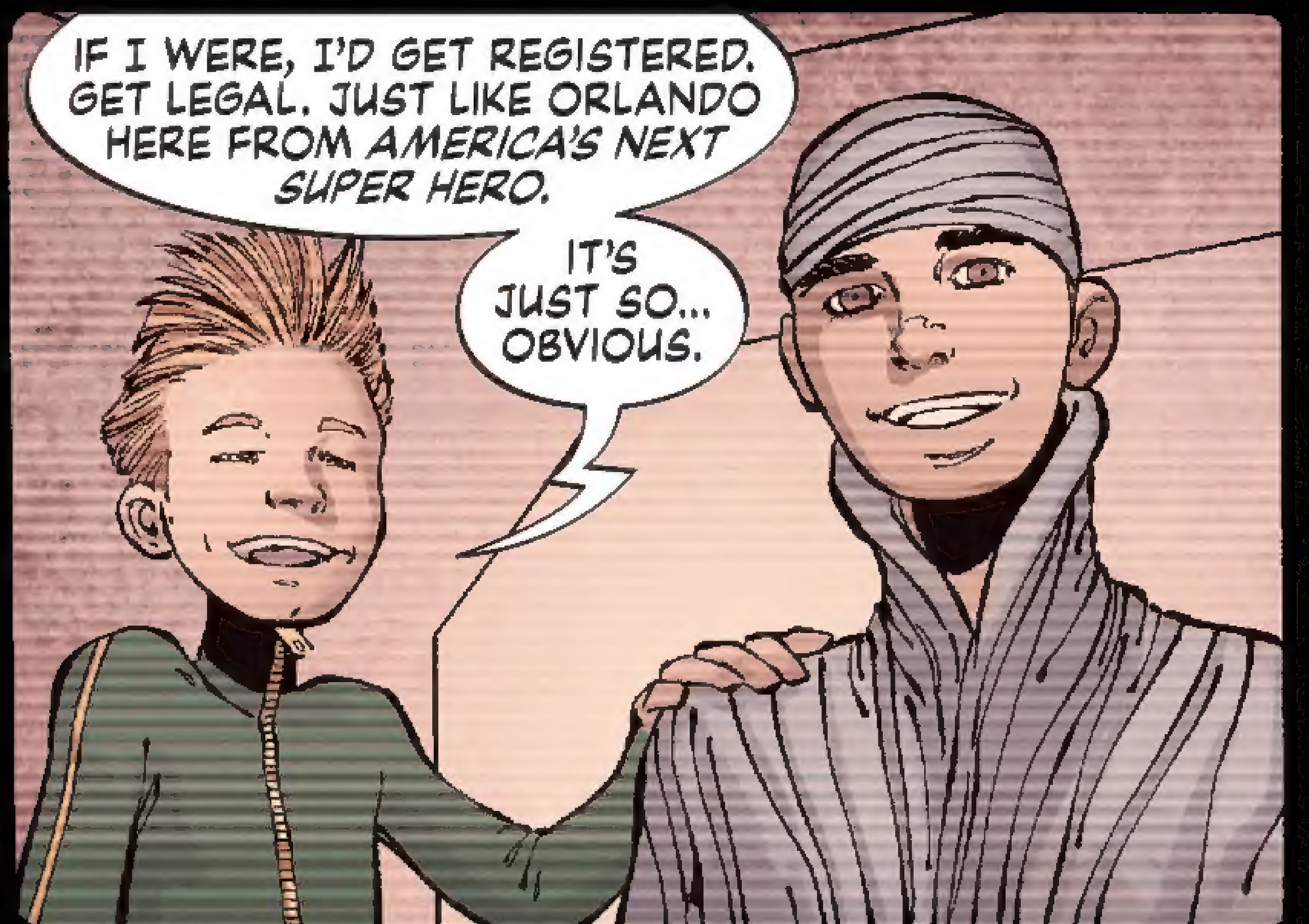
Tantrum

ZeeBee

Trucker


MY OPINION?
WELL, HE'S COMPLETELY DELUSORY. AND I'M PART OF HIS DELUSION. HE THINKS HE'S A MILLION YEARS OLD. HE CAN REMEMBER ANCIENT GREECE BUT HE CAN'T REMEMBER WHERE HE LIVES OR WHAT HE DOES FOR A LIVING.

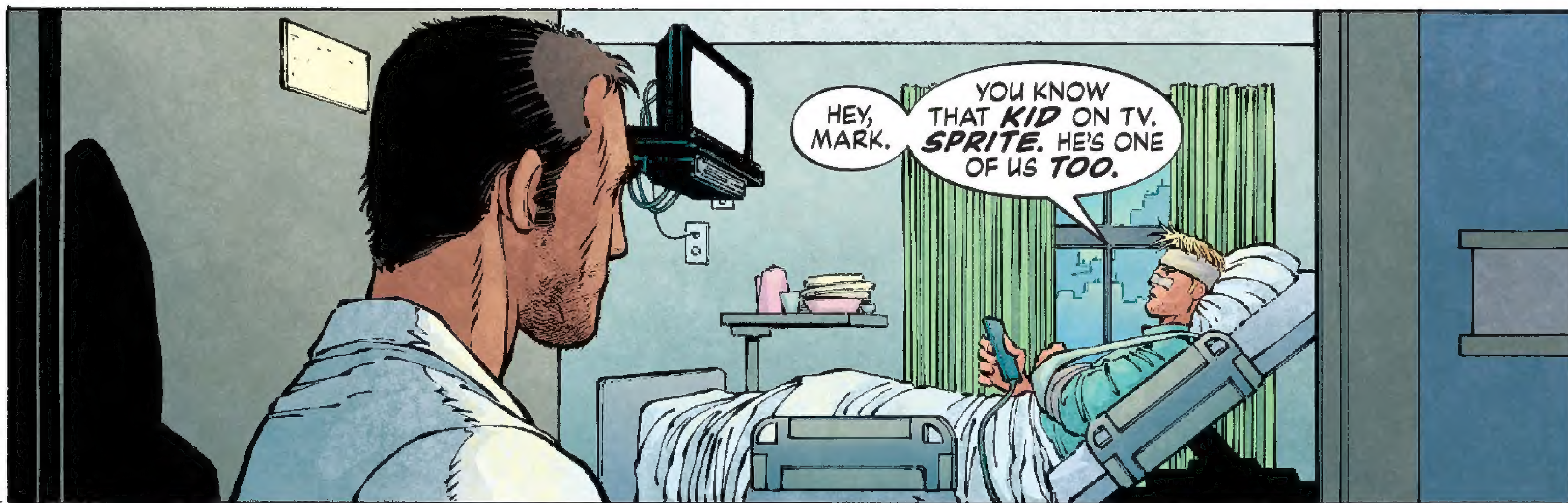

LISTEN UP! I'M SPRITE, FROM THE TWEENY CHANNEL'S IT'S JUST SO SPRITE. I'M AN ELEVEN-YEAR-OLD TV STAR, A ROCK STAR, AND I'LL SOON BE COMING TO YOUR SCREENS IN PARAMOUNT'S EINSTEIN WITH FRECKLES.
BUT I'M NOT A SUPER HERO.


IF I WERE, I'D GET REGISTERED. GET LEGAL. JUST LIKE ORLANDO HERE FROM AMERICA'S NEXT SUPER HERO.
IT'S JUST SO... OBVIOUS.


IT'S JUST SO SPRITE.
IF YOU'RE GONNA BE A HERO--GET REGISTERED.

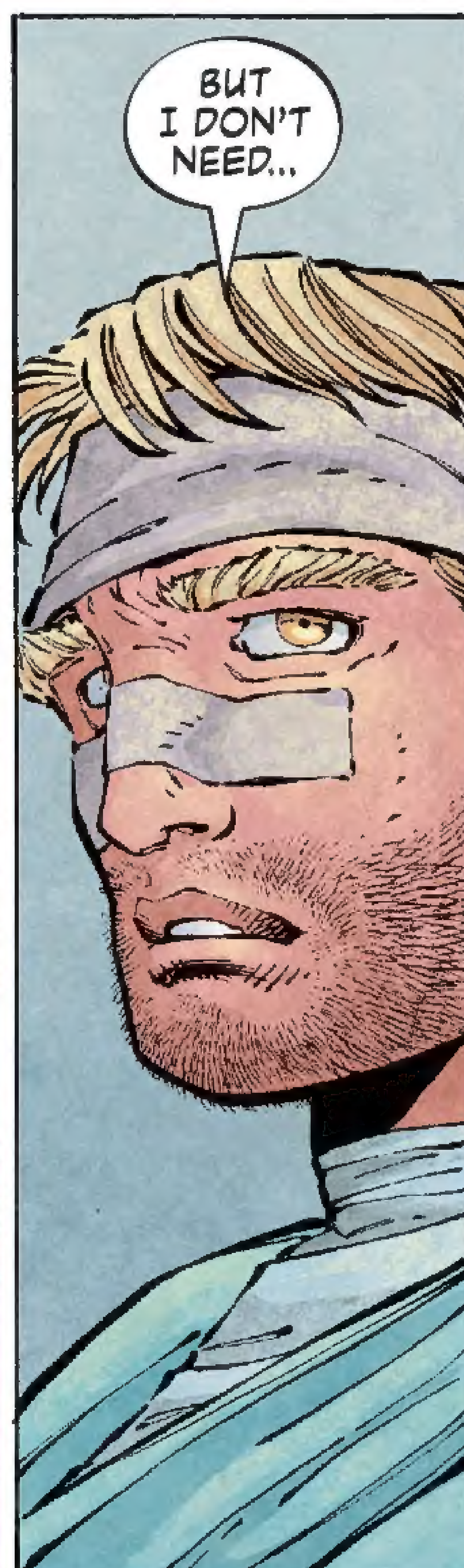

IT'S NOT JUST A GOOD IDEA.
IT'S THE LAW.

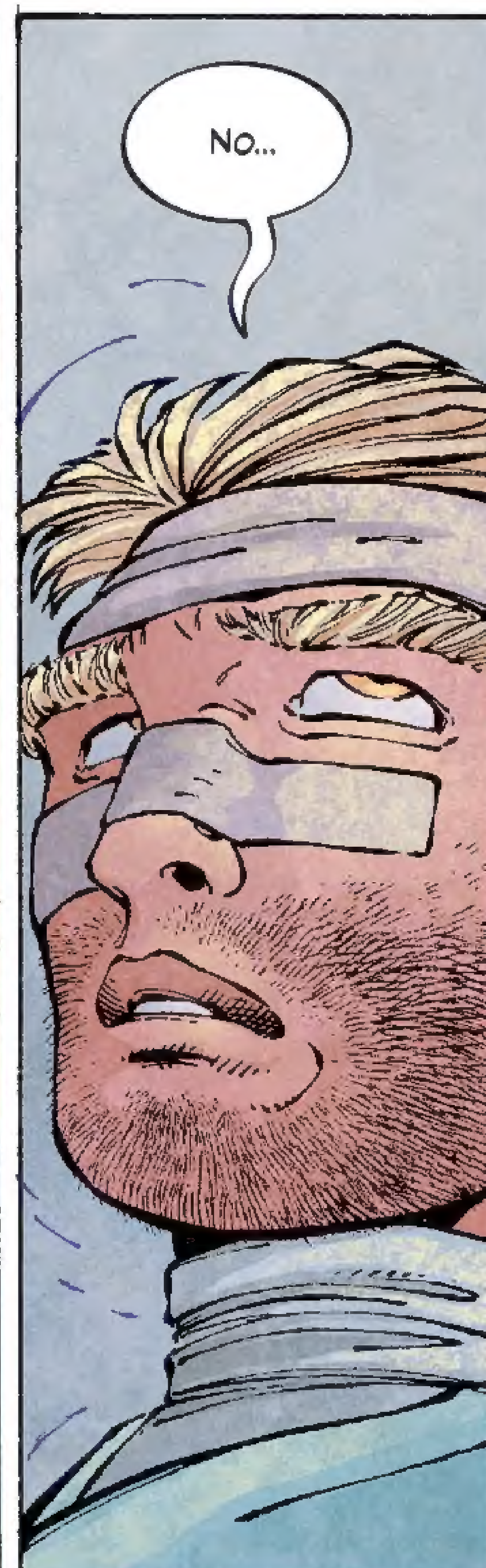

SO YOU DON'T THINK HE'S DANGEROUS, DOCTOR?
NOT AS LONG AS HE BELIEVES YOU ARE ONE OF THESE ETERNALS. RIGHT NOW YOU ARE HIS FRIEND. THE DANGER COMES WHEN HE DECIDES YOU ARE A DEVIANT, MR. CURRY. THEN HIS MISSION WOULD BE TO KILL YOU.
I SEE.
WE NEED TO GET HIM BACK TO A PLACE WHERE HE CAN'T HARM ANYBODY.

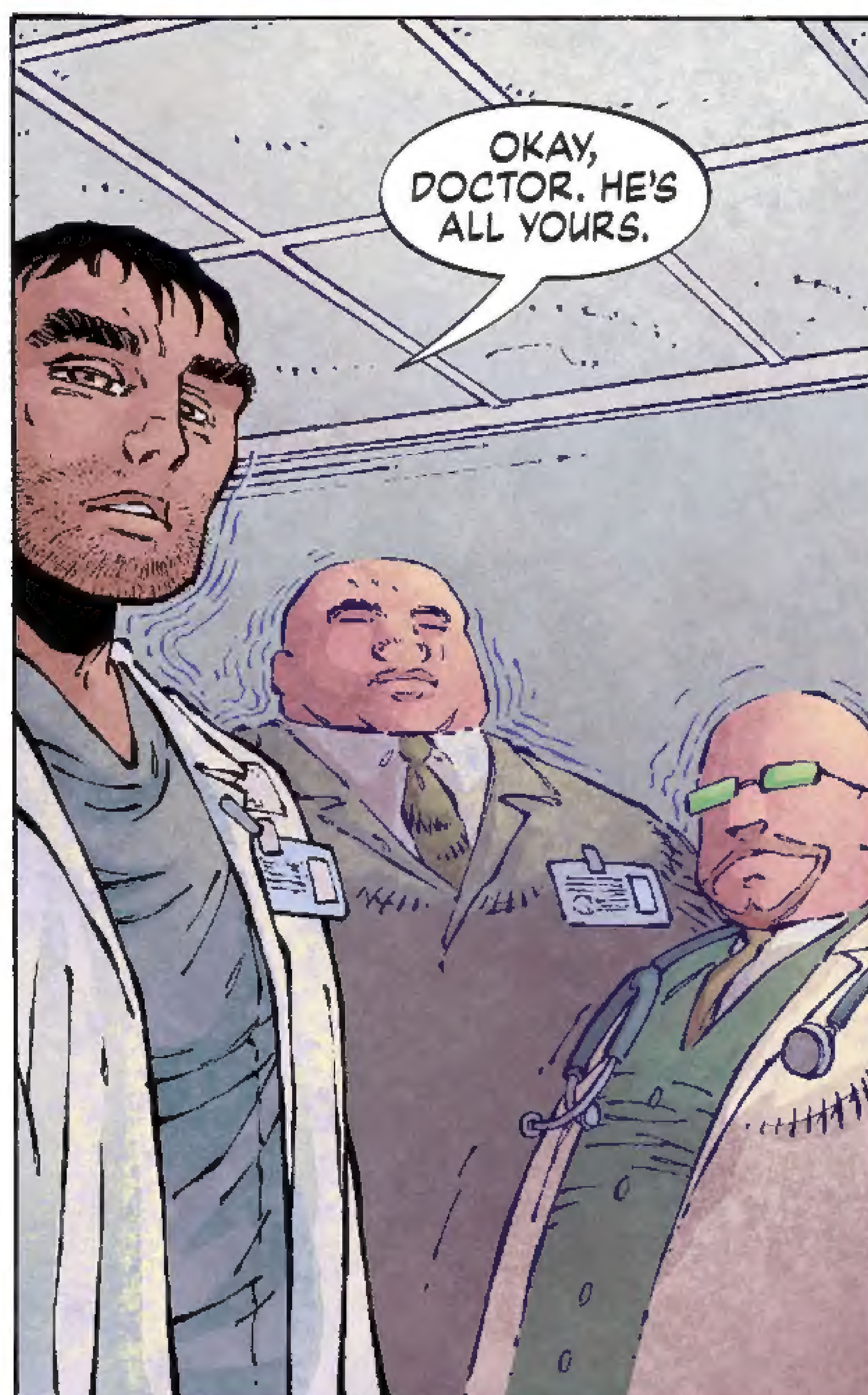

HEY, MARK.
YOU KNOW THAT KID ON TV. SPRITE. HE'S ONE OF US TOO.


WELL, I'M GLAD ONE OF THE ETERNALS IS MAKING OUT OKAY. IF WE'RE SO AMAZING, WHY AREN'T WE RICH, HUH?
YOU MUST BELIEVE ME, MARK. THERE ARE SO MANY MYSTERIES TO SOLVE, AND I NEED YOU BY MY SIDE.
MY BONES HAVE KNIT. I THINK I'M GOING TO BE FINE TO LEAVE THE HOSPITAL TODAY.


WELL, THAT'S GOING TO BE UP TO THE DOCTOR, AND NOT TO EITHER OF US.
IN THE MEANTIME, I'VE GOT A SHOT FOR YOU.
A SHOT? WHAT KIND OF SHOT?
JUST SOMETHING TO HELP YOU GET A LITTLE REST.


BUT I DON'T NEED...


No...


OKAY, DOCTOR. HE'S ALL YOURS.







ZONE